

Oral Questions

TRANSPORT

FREIGHT RATES—INQUIRY AS TO IMPLEMENTATION OF PROMISES MADE BY MINISTER OF JUSTICE

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Minister of Transport and perhaps give him the opportunity to respond to a transportation question concerning the west. Considering the absence of an over-all national policy, the uncertainty surrounding the formulation of the policy and the time when it will be presented, and considering the obvious reluctance of the government to fulfill some of the commitments it had made previously, can we assume that the promise made by the Minister of Justice to equalize freight rates and so reduce the freight rate on processed beef moving from western to central Canada, a promise which forms part of an agreement and which induced the western provinces to agree to the feed grain proposal, will not now be fulfilled.

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, so far as I am concerned, if the hon. gentleman has questions to ask of the Minister of Justice, he should ask them directly. Some of the western provinces wanted a number of set rates to be reviewed, and this matter has been referred to the CTC. We received a report and we are now studying those rates. As far as meat is concerned, I ask the hon. member to be specific, because I did not make any specific statement on that subject.

Mr. Mazankowski: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The minister has not answered my question. I was referring to the commitment made by the Minister of Justice as part of an over-all transportation policy. May I ask the Minister of Transport whether any discussions took place between the two ministers about the freight rate equalization proposal which the Minister of Justice promised the western Canadian provinces to implement.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, all promises made by the Minister of Justice are going to be respected.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

POSSIBLE AMENDMENT OF EXTRADITION TREATY WITH UNITED STATES

Mr. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs and concerns the case of Thomas Martin who has been charged with criminal negligence in the hit and run death of seven-year-old Joey Belleni of Hamilton. As Martin apparently cannot be brought back from the United States to face trial in this country because criminal negligence resulting in death is not an extraditable offence, may I ask the minister whether Canada has served notice on the United States that we should like to amend the extradition treaty, to ensure that this sort of thing cannot take place again.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any such notice. I did have the privilege of signing a new

[Mr. Drury.]

extradition treaty with the United States early in my career as Secretary of State for External Affairs, which represented a considerable improvement. This particular point was not raised at that time, but I will take the suggestion under consideration.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

EXCISE TAX ACT AND EXCISE ACT

The House resumed, from Thursday, January 23, consideration in committee of Bill C-40, to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Excise Act—Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton)—Mr. Penner in the chair.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. When the committee rose last evening, the hon. member for Comox-Alberni had the floor. The committee was considering clause 21.

On clause 21.

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Chairman, my remarks last evening were interrupted by the ten o'clock adjournment debate. Since then I have been approached by other members who have advised me of errors in my presentation. First, I have learned that stoneboats in Saskatchewan do not come under the excise tax laws, but the stones themselves are taxed under provincial mineral tax laws. Second, I learned that Albertans do not use boats to cross oil pools: I hear they walk on top of oil pools, singing Conservative hymns.

An hon. Member: Very funny. Who is your joke writer?

Mr. Anderson: Let me now refer to the coast of British Columbia. In the northern part of Vancouver Island, owing to the lack of highways, boats and aircraft often are the only means of transport. Taxing boats and aircraft will only increase transportation costs in an area already suffering from high costs. I do not think the provincial government is interested in the question of transportation in the northern part of Vancouver Island. However, I know that the minister in this House does not share that attitude and, let me say positively, neither does this member. Allow me to read some letters written by people in my area. Their letters concern the excise tax to be imposed on boats and aircraft. One letter reads:

I am writing this letter as a private citizen who is most concerned with the recent budget 10 per cent excise tax on pleasure craft over 20 h.p.

I believe this to be a tax that will completely discourage marine sales by now increasing prices to the consumer of approximately 20 per cent over last year.

This will drastically effect employment from the manufacturers level all the way through to the consumer level and personally feel that this will effect sales by a minimum of 25 per cent.

Since the budget was announced I have personally experienced heavy cancellations by consumers of boats that were tentatively placed for spring delivery. This tax plus the manufacturers 10 per cent cost increase is just more than the consumer will swallow in one year.