

*Oral Questions***TRANSPORT****INQUIRY WHETHER MINISTER DISCUSSED AUTOROUTES 13 AND 50 WITH QUEBEC COUNTERPART**

Mr. Robert Gourd (Argenteuil-Papineau): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

In view of the election promise of the Quebec minister of transport to start work on highway 50 and complete highway 13 if the federal government is willing to negotiate and assist in the financing, can the minister tell the House whether he has been approached by his provincial counterpart in relation with such negotiations?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, many factors will eventually influence the decision to transfer to Mirabel some of the routes now going to Dorval. In passing, I am willing to postpone my appointment as ambassador to be there when this decision is made.

There will be the cost to the government, the cost to the carriers and the cost to the passengers. Obviously, the quality of the road network around Mirabel will be a major factor. It is in this context that an extension of highway A-13 must be considered.

Until now, as far as I know, the Quebec government had indicated that the federal government should make a decision about the transfer before negotiations on highway A-13 are undertaken. My hon. friend for Argenteuil now says that the Quebec minister of transport is willing to reconsider this position.

Mr. Fox: For the third time.

Mr. Pepin: For the third time, as one of my colleagues has just said. As I expect to meet with the Quebec minister very soon concerning the announcement of an agreement on the Montreal commuter train network, we shall probably discuss this matter at the same time.

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[English]

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY**LEGISLATION RESPECTING FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS**

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Given that a promise was made to the Canadian people that the federal government would introduce legislation to set mandatory fuel efficiency standards for automobiles, will the minister give an explanation of why the government has failed to introduce this legislation?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, the legislation is currently being drafted and will be introduced soon. The hon. member knows that there has been no time in the schedule of the House to

consider a number of pieces of legislation. There are something like 40 bills awaiting consideration by Parliament. I am very eager, as are my colleagues, to see Parliament examine expeditiously these bills as well as others that will come forward, including the one referred to by my hon. friend. I hope we will get the co-operation of the opposition.

Mr. McDermid: Madam Speaker, it is obvious who has the pull over there and who can get their bills introduced in the House. Since the government is trying to convince Canadians that the most important step to energy self-sufficiency is conservation, why would the minister have put increased costs and energy taxes ahead of the conservation legislation? Could it be that the government is broke?

Mr. Lalonde: Madam Speaker, the hon. member must have been living in a dreamworld in the last six months, unless he was living some kind of nightmare of his own. In effect, we have introduced conservation measures and I will name one in particular, whereby Canadians can switch to natural gas or electricity in most provinces and get an \$800 grant for that conservation.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: When?

Mr. Lalonde: They can do that, keep receipts, and the program will come into effect on April 1, without having to wait for the co-operation of my hon. friend, which is not very forthcoming when it comes to passing legislation in this House.

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PENSIONS**DELAY IN CONVENING NATIONAL PENSIONS CONFERENCE**

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. The Speech from the Throne promised the convening of a national pensions conference by the fall of 1980. Within six months that promise was broken. I should like to ask the minister why there was such indecent haste to break that promise; has she been collaborating on a way to promise conventions and then break those promises by working with the Minister of Employment and Immigration?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): I have a real—

[Translation]

—how should I say, it really hurts me, Madam Speaker.

[English]

It really hurts me to have to inform the hon. Tory member that another hon. Tory government, namely, the government of Ontario, had to wait until it called an election to publish a very important report on pensions, which was released on Friday last week. By courtesy and elementary common sense we did not want that money to be wasted. We have that report now and our conference will be held on March 31. I hope the hon. member will be there.