

Oral Questions

long time to come. This is part of the Canadian economy, as it is part of the economy of any industrial country. The question is whether we are taking all precautionary measures which should be taken in such circumstances. In this instance, yes we are. The Atomic Energy Control Board's regulations as well as the regulations on packaging of the Canadian Transport Commission are being implemented as they should. The transportation of dangerous goods section of my department is monitoring the operation. All precautionary measures are being taken. I suggest that is all that can be done unless you want to stop the economy, a great amount of which is based on the transportation of dangerous goods.

Mr. Rose: I would like to see a cost benefit study on that one.

CONTINGENCY PLANS TO COPE WITH POSSIBLE DISASTER

Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody): This country does not have a clean-up team such as the private clean-up teams offered by the Western Sherwood Mining company in the state of Washington. The minister knows that a derailment in the Fraser canyon could wipe out fish stocks for years to come, salmon stocks in particular. He also knows that a derailment in a populated area could contaminate it for years to come. Since this insanity is being permitted, and this is not the first time, I have two questions for the minister. First, will he outline to the House briefly what contingency plans he has other than just labelling the boxcars or flatcars, to prevent another Mississauga, a nuclear Mississauga? Second, will he assure the House that this kind of Australian "nuclear special" will not be permitted any reruns?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I explained at some length that the regulations of the Atomic Energy Control Board and the CTC are being implemented in this case. I went to some length to explain that my department is keeping a watchful eye on the situation. What else can be done? I do not deny that there is a danger. I am just saying that if one takes as a postulate that you should not carry dangerous goods, you would have to stop a good percentage of the Canadian economy. That is what I am saying.

● (1440)

On the subject of transportation of dangerous goods, this House passed legislation recently, about a year ago, which is being implemented now, and regulations are being developed. We have also had an inquiry, the Grange inquiry, into the transportation of dangerous goods, and nine of the 15 recommendations of Justice Grange are already being implemented, and the other six are being discussed before the CTC. I am just saying the problem is a real one and we are taking the necessary measures to cope with it.

[Translation]

TRANSPORT

CONSULTATION BETWEEN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND PORT OF MONTREAL—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie): Madam Speaker, could the Minister of Transport tell us whether the statement made by the Quebec Minister of Transport to the effect that there had been no consultation between the federal government and the port of Montreal is true or not?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I must say that the difficulty lies in the fact that the statement was made by the Quebec Minister of Economic Development rather than by the Quebec Minister of Transport. Now we are not in a position to decide to whom we should report; in this case, we are reporting to the Quebec Minister of Transport. The new port policy was discussed at length at least twice with department officials. The minister received the publicity, the press release, the booklet, along with the announcement. So we do not think that Mr. Landry has any cause for complaint. He might have cause for complaint because his colleague the Minister of Transport failed to tell him about his exchange of correspondence with us on the matter.

* * *

[English]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

UREA FORMALDEHYDE FOAM INSULATION—COMPENSATION FOR HOME OWNERS

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, will the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs tell the House if the government has decided to pay compensation to those people who installed urea formaldehyde foam insulation in their homes? The minister indicated that the cabinet was to consider the terms of an assistance package today.

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question for it enables me to tell the House that the government has authorized the immediate establishment of an action and co-ordination centre in my department in Ottawa to help Canadians who are facing this problem. Second, all Canadians anxious to contact this action and information centre will have access to a toll-free telephone service. Third, a national program will be launched in the coming months to monitor some 2,400 houses throughout Canada with a view to meeting the needs of those who feel most affected and most concerned by this question. Fourth, special monitoring and research units will be set up in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Finally, Madam Speaker, pursuant