

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**TRANSPORT****NEW GRAIN TRANSPORTATION POLICY—GUARANTEES  
DEMANDED BY QUEBEC COALITION MOVEMENT**

**Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. The Minister must be aware of the fierce opposition of the sectors concerned to the grain transportation policy announced recently by the Minister of Transport. The changes it contains are a major source of concern to the agricultural industry and some financial sectors in Quebec. Since the coalition movement is convinced that studies of the consequences of this new policy have been clearly inadequate, could the Minister, who is surely seeking a fair solution for all Provinces as far as agriculture is concerned, could the Minister inform the House that he will ask his colleague to put this project on hold, until such time as the guarantees demanded by the Quebec coalition movement are announced?

● (1440)

[English]

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Madam Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member is aware of what I said in the House before, that I support my colleague, the Minister of Transport, in the proposal which he has put forward to this country on the Crowsnest Pass rate, the recommendations and changes in an obsolete type of legislation. It is to be changed. We know there is going to be some resentment. We never said there would not be some rejection of what the Crowsnest Pass rates are going to do. I would ask the Hon. Member to read the documentation which we have prepared. If he would like any more information or any more studies, we can show him that, for instance, it is going to be for the betterment of agriculture in Canada, not for its detriment.

[Translation]

**Mr. La Salle:** Madam Speaker, it is clear from the Minister's answer that the agricultural industry in Quebec does not have much to expect from the Minister, and especially not his sympathy. Would the Minister perhaps care to explain why he decided to spend \$350,000 to shove this plan down our throats before consideration by Parliament and before it is implemented, and does the Minister expect Quebecers to trust him if he has to spend \$350,000 to explain a policy on which not enough information is available and not enough studies have been done?

[English]

**Mr. Whelan:** Madam Speaker, I will try with even more purpose, because it is such a great day, March 17, St. Patrick's Day, to be as nice as I can to the Hon. Member, through you, Madam Speaker. He knows very well why the ads were put in the papers. It was especially because of the ads which the Government of Quebec put in which we thought were misleading, wrong, and false. We put these ads in to state the facts as

they should be stated. The Hon. Member only dreams that he, even as a native of Quebec, would have the respect of the farmers that I do in the Province of Quebec. He would love to have that kind of respect.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Whelan:** I say to him, Madam Speaker, study the facts, study what we are doing, and study the past history of this Minister of Agriculture and of this Government, and if he finds it has not been beneficial for agriculture, I would be very surprised, because the agricultural industry in Canada is the healthiest agricultural industry probably in the whole world. And that is not because of what we have not done, Madam Speaker. It is because of what we have done.

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**ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS****PROPOSAL TO PHASE OUT LEADED GASOLINE**

**Hon. Bud Cullen (Sarnia-Lambton):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. The Minister has recently given us the indication that he may phase out the use of lead in gasoline and that people who are objecting to this proposal have only 60 days to respond, and must respond to his particular Department. I wonder if the Minister would consider having an independent tribunal make this determination because, after all we are dealing here with one expert opinion on the one side, and expert opinions on the other. It would seem to me to be a little fairer to have someone other than environmental officials make this determination.

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of the Environment):** Madam Speaker, while I appreciate the concern of the Hon. Member and would like to salute his concerns and the energy which he has displayed in relation to this question, I must say that we are acting on the basis of the recommendations which come from the medical experts in the Department of National Health and Welfare. I do not believe there is any reason to doubt their objectivity in the matter, nor do I have any reason to doubt that my own officials will bring an objective disposition to it. Therefore, I would not, unfortunately be able to accede to his suggestion that we proceed with some sort of inquiry or review outside of the presently envisaged arrangement.

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**MARINE TRANSPORT****FUEL COMPENSATION TAX—REQUEST FOR ABOLITION**

**Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East):** Madam Speaker, my question is supplementary to a question asked earlier today by the Hon. Member for Annapolis Valley-Hants. Last year the Great Lakes Shipping Association was down about 30 per cent in its capacity. That involves some 300