

Oral Questions

anticipate this agreement being renewed, and when he expects it to be signed?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of the Environment and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, the agreement which was worked out with the Province of Nova Scotia has been affirmed by the cabinet. I hope to have it signed as soon as possible. I want to thank the hon. member for the work she has put into moving us toward this objective.

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CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

INCREASE IN FARMERS' COSTS—REQUEST THAT SELLING PRICE BE INCREASED

Mr. Bill McKnight (Kindersley-Lloydminster): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport in his capacity as the Canadian Wheat Board minister. Last night in reply to a question that I asked, his parliamentary secretary stated that the policy of the government, as it was last evening, is to continue with the minimum of \$5 a bushel and maximum \$7 for domestic Red Spring wheat for human consumption and a minimum of \$5 for durum. That is what the parliamentary secretary said last night. If that is true, can the minister advise why he has not taken into account the 25 per cent increase in the cost of input in the last two years, 1980 to this year, and why he would not increase the domestic price for grain in Canada by that amount of 25 per cent because of the cost farmers are facing as a result of grain selling below the cost of production? This should be very simple and rudimentary for the government to perform.

● (1140)

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I am quite sure that my parliamentary secretary also said that a review of this particular subject is going on. In the meantime, we are continuing with the range that exists in the act now. This is under review and we probably will have an announcement to make in the future on the subject.

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RAILWAYS

CROWSNEST PASS RATES—REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION OF GILSON REPORT

Mr. Bill McKnight (Kindersley-Lloydminster): Madam Speaker, I am sure the minister is aware that we are going into a new crop year on August 1, and that farmers are selling grain below the cost of production. He spoke of large wheat sales, but farmers cannot make more money by increasing volume when they lose money on every bushel they sell. We assume that the minister intends to implement a 45 per cent increase in the next three years in the cost of transportation for western grain. In this House he assured us that by the end of July he would announce the government's policy regarding the

Gilson report. Today is July 30. Is the minister prepared to make the government's position on the Gilson report public, or is he going to wait, as I suggested he would, until the House has adjourned so that he will then be safe from the attacks that the opposition plans to mount?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I expect that the House will be sitting in the coming days. The Cabinet has reviewed the Gilson report and will be in a position early next week to give the first response to it.

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METRIC CONVERSION

COMPULSORY ASPECT OF LAW ON ADVERTISING

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Justice I will direct my question to the Acting Attorney General or to whomever can speak for justice on the government benches.

In view of the fact that the government dropped charges against Mrs. Zoritza Kasparian of Calgary because she had violated Section 7 of the Weights and Measures Act, which says that she was not allowed to advertise her carpets in imperial measure, and in view of the variety of positions taken by the government on the Kasparian case, what advice will the Department of Justice be giving to the Metric Commission with respect to Section 7? Will it be to modify or remove altogether the compulsory aspect of this law which forces metric advertising only?

Mr. Jim Peterson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development): Madam Speaker, this is an issue which has been discussed by the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Discussions are going on with the industry at the moment, as the hon. member opposite is aware. The charge under Section 7 of the Weights and Measures Act was withdrawn because of technical problems that were being encountered in the specific circumstances. Accordingly, we feel that it is appropriate to undertake further consultations with a view to clarifying Section 7 of the Weights and Measures Act and the regulations, and in order to make them more precise so that Canadians can better understand their rights and obligations under these provisions.

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, quite obviously the government could not make Section 7 stick. If it is unenforceable we can only assume that any further prosecutions will be held in abeyance until Section 7 is cleared up.

REQUEST THAT MEASUREMENTS BE PERMITTED IN BOTH IMPERIAL AND METRIC SYSTEMS

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, I wonder if I might put a question to the Prime Minister in a more general vein. The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs is now carrying on discussions with the industry and is