legislation that which was promised to the maritimes during the debate on the transport bill last year?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wish to ask the minister whether he is giving consideration to including under the Maritime Freight Rates Act forms of transportation other than railway transportation.

Mr. Hellyer: This matter is being considered in the over-all study of maritime transportation problems, and will be considered by the Department of Transport and the Canadian Transport Commission in the context of the over-all study.

[*Later:*]

Mr. David Lewis (York South): I sought to rise earlier to ask a supplementary question of the Minister of Transport, but now I wish to ask a related question. Would the minister inform the house whether the announcement about freight rate change in the maritime provinces was accompanied by an undertaking that those laid off by the C.N.R. will immediately or within a reasonable period be recalled to their jobs?

Mr. Hellyer: That was not part of the undertaking, Mr. Speaker. I indicated to the union that certainly anything like that would need to be discussed by the cabinet as a whole. I also said that there were certain financial implications which would make this extremely difficult at the present time when the government is examining all projects to see where economies can be effected. I referred to the necessity for the examination of priorities of other projects, including many in the maritimes.

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the minister if it is his intention to attend a mass meeting to be held in the steel workers' hall at Sydney this coming Sunday relative to the large scale lay-offs of C.N.R. employees and the increasing burden of the inequitable freight rate structure which is also causing unemployment, regardless of what the minister has said this afternoon?

Mr. Hellyer: I regret that it will not be possible for me to attend that meeting.

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the hon. gentleman if a representative of the government or of his own office will be at that meeting?

Mr. Hellyer: May I take that question as notice? I do not know whether that will be possible. Will my hon. friend be there?

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): Most certainly.

CREAM—ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESTORATION OF OLD EXPRESS RATES

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport): While I have the floor perhaps I could answer a question raised by the hon. member for Mackenzie. I am advised by the Canadian Transport Commission that the old express rates on cream and returned empties were restored on November 2. This means, as far as the prairies are concerned, that the announced increase never went into effect.

In eastern Canada the old rates were reinstated effective November 2. The new rates have been in effect since September of this year. The action of the railways in co-operation with the Canadian Transport Commission will permit time for the railways and the cream industry to examine the situation. It is expected that a new agreed rate structure will come into effect within 30 days.

[*Translation*]

SHIPPING

ST. LAWRENCE RIVER—MAINTENANCE OF WINTER NAVIGATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a supplementary question? The Minister of Transport has just announced good news about transportation in the maritimes, but can he also tell us what action his department has decided to take in order to maintain navigation on the St. Lawrence next winter?

[*English*]

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): Tell him to take it up with de Gaulle.

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport): We intend to make sure that icebreaking is carried on in such a way that it will prevent flooding in the St. Lawrence to the maximum extent possible.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, may I put a further supplementary question?