

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly be pleased to examine clauses of that type, the more so as Bill C-2 provides that such a practice as that mentioned by the hon. member would be illegal, if the price is ridiculously low and likely to limit seriously competition. I think this is another example of the urgency to amend our competition act and I hope the hon. member will persuade his colleagues on the other side to support my action.

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● (1440)

[English]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

SUGAR—ALLEGED REFUSAL OF REDPATH, ATLANTIC AND ST. LAWRENCE REFINERIES TO ACCEPT ORDERS FOR FUTURE DELIVERIES TO SMALL PROCESSORS

Mr. Bill Kempling (Halton-Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs aware of the practices of the big three sugar companies operating in Canada, namely, Redpath, St. Lawrence and Atlantic, of refusing to accept orders for future delivery of sugar to small processors, which is the usual custom for supplying larger firms, and of their only supplying these small processors on a short-term pickup basis?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would be very happy to be provided with all the details on the type of activity the Redpath Company is indulging in. If the hon. member wants to give them to me, I will gladly accept them and pass them on to the officials of my department for them to take necessary action.

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[English]

LABOUR RELATIONS

WALKOUT OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES—POSSIBILITY OF SETTLEMENT—INVESTIGATION OF METHODS TO SETTLE FUTURE DIFFICULTIES

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, in view of some uncertainty as to the actual status of the railway walkout, can the Minister of Labour enlighten the House on the actual situation?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I believe the matter is presently being resolved and I am awaiting another report at any time.

Mr. Ritchie: Mr. Speaker, as more than 1,250,000 workers will be involved in wage settlements in the coming year is the minister actively pursuing methods such as voluntary arbitration or final offer in dealing with this type of walkout?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, the discussion we are now undertaking with labour, business and industry is designed for that very purpose, to see if we can through some type of tripartite arrangement find better ways of avoiding work stoppages of this kind.

Oral Questions

In connection with the hon. member's first question, I think the House will be pleased to know that I think an agreement has now been reached, subject to confirmation, between the railway unions and management in respect of the ensuing year.

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HEALTH

MEDICAL RESEARCH AT UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA—REQUEST FOR INCREASED GRANTS

Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of National Health and Welfare I should like to direct my question to his parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for Southwestern Nova. In view of the fact that federal support of medical research at the University of British Columbia has been significantly decreasing, and that on October 15 the Canadian Medical Science Community presented a brief to the minister on the immediate need for increased funding, does the minister now feel convinced of the need for greater assistance to medical research at the University of British Columbia and across Canada?

Miss Coline Campbell (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I have taken note of the hon. member's question and I will bring it to the attention of the minister.

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[Translation]

HOUSING

SUGGESTION \$500 GRANT TO BE RETROACTIVE TO JULY 1, 1974

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Minister of State for Urban Affairs.

Would the hon. Minister inform this House whether he has considered the possibility of making the \$500 grant provided for new house owners retroactive to July 1, 1974, rather than to November 1, 1974?

[English]

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I did consider that and rejected it. I did agree that it would be retroactive from the date of the announcement, when the legislation is passed.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I had intended to wait until the end of the question period, but since the minister has dealt with a similar question I will raise it now. In response to one of my questions I think the minister inadvertently misinformed the House. The question concerned the new interest rate the government was charging the provinces under section 43, which has gone up to 10% per cent. The minister replied that the rate was still such that the provinces would want to borrow money from the government as they could get it cheaper there than elsewhere. I am informed that precisely because it is now at this rate it will undermine the public housing program as provinces can get the money cheaper elsewhere. Would the minister inform the House