

Mr. Andras: I do not think we are interested in any of that male chauvinistic talk opposite. The amendment as described by my colleague is the intention of the government, but the precise date of its implementation into law has not been reached yet.

Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware that his colleague's statement is not in accord with the legislation regarding maternity benefits proposed in Bill C-16, and given the confusion that this has caused among the general public and the UIC offices across the country about the intent of the amendment, will the minister move toward resolving this situation by arranging with the House leader to have this bill brought forward immediately?

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, I will note the hon. member's representation.

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AIRPORTS

ALLEGED USE OF CHILD LABOUR FOR JANITORIAL WORK AT HALIFAX—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

Mr. Leonard C. Jones (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Is he aware that child labour, both male and female, has been used for janitorial work such as cleaning floors and washrooms at the Halifax International Airport, in particular on Easter Sunday, March 30, 1975? If the minister is not aware of this will he cause an investigation to be made and report to this House immediately? Would he also confirm whether this is governmental or departmental policy?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): I will surely inquire, Mr. Speaker.

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FOOD PRICES REVIEW BOARD

ALLEGED REFUSAL OF BOARD TO GIVE INFORMATION ON MEAT OPERATIONS OF CANADA SAFEWAY TO MANITOBA LIVESTOCK AND MEAT COMMISSION

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I suppose I could say of my question that this is the third time of asking. Last Thursday in the absence of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs I put a question to the acting minister with reference to the fact that the Food Prices Review Board had refused to give certain information concerning the meat operations of Canada Safeway in Manitoba to the Manitoba Livestock and Meat Commission. Since I put my question rather fully last Thursday I need not go into it again now, but is the minister yet in a position to give the House a reply as to whether the Food Prices Review Board will be asked to co-operate in this matter?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, no doubt the hon. member's

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perseverance will have succeeded, since I am told that the Manitoba Livestock Commission will receive all the information it requests directly from Safeway.

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● (1450)

[English]

TRANSPORT

FREIGHT RATES—APPLICATION FOR 20 PER CENT INCREASE—POSSIBILITY OF INTERVENTION BY MINISTER TO PREVENT

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Transport. On February 24, 1975, in a joint communiqué of the meeting of federal and provincial ministers of transport on western transportation the minister was quoted as saying that he was opposed to any further general horizontal percentage increases in freight rates. Noting that The Canadian National Railways have filed for a 20 per cent increase in class of freight rates which would come into effect on May 5 and which could have quite a spin-off effect on other rates, I should like to ask the minister what action he will be taking in support of his statement that he is opposed to any further horizontal rail freight rate increases?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had exactly the same question put to me. Today the answer is the same. I am still opposed to the kind of increase that is proposed.

Mr. Murta: Since the purpose of the 18 month freeze on freight rates was to find a solution to the so called anomalies and noting that the final study has not been completed as yet, and since the minister says he is still opposed to a further increase, but a decision will have to be made one way or the other before May 5 when the increases will come into effect, what specific action will he take? Rather than telling us his views, can he tell us what his department will do?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): I think that I spoke about ten times in the House on how the freeze was imposed, for what purpose and for what length of time. All these questions were answered and I have nothing new to add.

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

MONITORING OF REDUCTION IN SALES TAX ON BUILDING MATERIALS TO ENSURE CONSUMERS BENEFIT

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. What adequate monitoring procedures will he set-up to ensure that reductions in the sales tax on building materials will be passed on to consumers and will not in fact represent windfall gains to house builders?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, this is something which comes under the jurisdiction of my colleague, the minister