

*Oral Questions*

emigrate if they so wish? Have we done that? What diplomatic channels are we using? Could he be more specific?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs):** I will be as specific as I can, Mr. Speaker. The Hon. Member knows these matters are within the internal management and prerogative of the government concerned, in this case the Government of Syria. It would be easy enough for us to make either public or private representations which might have a short-term effect in meeting the Hon. Member's request but not be very helpful in getting the job done in Syria. That is what we have to keep in mind.

I know we have had this particular matter under consideration. I will inform myself as to whether there have been any recent representations on this particular case, and I will be glad to advise the Hon. Member.

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**EMERGENCY MEASURES****MINISTERIAL POWER TO ESTABLISH CIVILIAN INTERNMENT CAMPS**

**Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice. The Emergency Planning Order of 1981 has a provision which empowers the Solicitor General of Canada to establish, administer, and operate civilian internment camps, facilitate the selective reduction and transfer of prison populations, and to provide for the establishment of civilian internment camps. That has the effect of freeing people who have been convicted of a criminal offence in order to make room for people who have not been convicted. I would like to ask the Minister, who is charged with the protection of our civil rights, if he agrees with that provision?

**Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I am responsible for Emergency Planning Canada and I suggest the Hon. Member read the Order in Council carefully. He will realize that, with a minimum of understanding, he cannot come to that conclusion.

**POSITION OF MINISTER OF JUSTICE**

**Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to put my question to the Minister of Justice and have him answer it, not the President of the Privy Council. I want to know from the man who is supposed to be protecting our civil rights whether he agrees with that provision?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, it is a question of interpreting the clause to which my hon. friend refers. Every proposal put forward by the Government in statutory form or for regulation is vetted by officials of the Department of Justice precisely for that kind of criteria.

**RAILWAYS****TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS**

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Transport who, earlier this winter, in a speech to the Council of Transport Ministers, expressed his firm resolve to reduce the risk involved in the movement of dangerous goods by rail. Specifically he talked about reducing the speed of trains in densely populated areas, and about measures to deal with empty cars which carry hazardous products. What action has been taken in that regard? Can he give the House any indication which might demonstrate his firm resolve to deal with these very important and crucial issues?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I think we can satisfy the Hon. Member because we have taken two very specific steps since that declaration. First, I met with the country's major railroads to talk about the issues brought forward. We agreed at that time that we would call together an advisory group of railroad and industry people, particularly the petrochemical industry, to talk about how further standards or measures might be developed and whether the existing requirements and standards are in fact satisfactory. We are now in the midst of drafting the terms of reference which would be agreeable to the parties involved.

Secondly, we have the new office of Inspector General of Safety in Transport, and I have given to him prime responsibility to begin examining the entire area of the movement of dangerous goods. He is now engaged in that and will be meeting tomorrow morning with a major group from Toronto to hear the representations on that issue. I have asked him to do an overview and report back to me on whether supplementary or ancillary action should be taken.

**DISTRIBUTION OF DEPARTMENTAL DOCUMENT**

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville):** Mr. Speaker, I am advised the Minister has had a briefing document commissioned by his Department in response to the recommendations of M-Trac, the citizens' group from Toronto. I also understand this report has been made available only to Liberal Members of Parliament for the Toronto area. Will the Minister not make that information available to all Members of the House so that we can see precisely what he has in mind? Also, as I understand it, there are some very basic differences of opinion between the Minister office, the CRTC, and the railroads, about speed reduction and the issue of harmonic oscillation. Could the Minister tell the House whether he has had any discussions with the CTC over resolving these different points of view, and can he report to the House on the success or failure of those discussions?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I have had several rounds of discussions, and one was with the Railway Transport Committee where they brought forward the kind of action in which they are presently engaged. As I said, I have met with railroads to discuss their activities,