

from the Thunder Bay and District Labour Council last week? If there is a little communication, it may help.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Skeena.

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I wish to assure the right hon. member that that communique has been conveyed to the minister responsible for the Wheat Board, the Minister of Justice—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, it was impossible to hear what the Minister of Manpower and Immigration was saying.

Mr. Speaker: May we have order, please.

Mr. Diefenbaker: No one would want to miss such words of wisdom.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

SHORTAGE OF BOXCARS FOR SHIPMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA LUMBER

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Transport with regard to the allocation of boxcars. Is the minister aware of the situation in north central British Columbia where there is a shortage of approximately 2,000 boxcars for lumber shipment, the result of which is increasing unemployment in sawmills and the logging section of the industry, all because CNR is unable to supply the required number of boxcars to move the lumber out of that area.

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the situation is the same for the British Columbia Railway which is owned by the British Columbia government. Because of the strike there are shortages everywhere. Attempts are being made to supply as many boxcars as possible. There is a shortage at the present time. There is no doubt about it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I bring to the attention of hon. members that there are just three or four minutes before the end of the question period. The hon. member for Skeena might ask one supplementary, after which I will recognize the hon. member for Rimouski and try to have two or three other questions before the end of the question period.

Mr. Howard: Is the minister aware the British Columbia Railway took action earlier this spring to acquire a number of boxcars and CN has been sitting on its ass doing nothing?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

HOUSING

AGREEMENT WITH QUEBEC ON USE OF NATIONAL HOUSING ACT PROGRAMS

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State responsible for housing.

Following the adoption of Bill C-133 and in view of the fact that winter time is closing in and that the municipalities have projects to be implemented, can the minister tell the House whether the negotiations with the Quebec government are completed? If so, is the minister prepared to make a statement in the House to indicate the contents of this agreement?

[English]

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there is an agreement between the government of Canada, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the province of Quebec for the use of National Housing Act programs within the province of Quebec. That agreement is in operation and is working.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

POSSIBLE EFFECT OF BENEFITS ON INCENTIVE TO WORK

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. In view of the fact the average weekly benefits paid by the Unemployment Insurance Commission have risen by 13 per cent from July, 1972, to July, 1973, and for the same period the consumer price index rose 7.7 per cent, will the minister admit that the UIC scheme is providing a disincentive to work that may affect the figures recently received?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS

DEER LODGE HOSPITAL, WINNIPEG—EFFECT OF DELAY IN REACHING WAGE SETTLEMENT WITH NURSES ON CONDITIONS

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Veterans Affairs. Due to the government's ten month delay in settling wage negotiations with the nursing group of the Professional Institute of the Public Service, which is causing serious economic problems for the nursing staff at Deer Lodge Veterans Hospital in Winnipeg, plus low morale, staff shortages and, the most serious aspect of the problem, decreasing nursing attention to our veterans in that hospital, will the minister order an investigation and take corrective action on the deplorable conditions which exist at Deer Lodge?