

Rail Line Abandonment

the businessmen which are a little experienced should have thought that our nuclear exports to India should be made under such conditions the minister wants to have now.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I consider that even if the decision has been made too late, it will still be valuable and will apply at least to future exports.

We know how the official energy crisis and petroleum products shortage have created an awareness in all nations of the world about the importance of energy now and in the years to come for the economic development of all countries. This is why the minister is acting cautiously, and rightly so, about such a dangerous and valuable energy product, both as concerns industrial development and the dangers involved if our exports were used in case of war, since Canada will become an important producer of nuclear energy on an international level.

First, as the minister indicated, atomic energy must be used for specific purposes and to meet our own needs. We must allow Canada itself to develop its own nuclear resources before thinking about other countries. We must show that atomic energy can help Canada progress. However, we should not do like the Arab countries which unfortunately export their resources and then export their dollars. Moreover, the population of Arab countries do not profit from the billions of dollars in natural resources which are exported throughout the world. Yet, the petroleum kings of Arab countries waste the money they have made with their countries' natural resources at roulette in Las Vegas. Mr. Speaker, this shocking example of Arab countries will not be followed by Canada because we shall first have to develop our country, and then we can export our surplus. We must sell our atomic products at a profit in order to reinforce the Canadian economy.

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[English]

TEXTILE AND CLOTHING BOARD

TABLING OF REPORTS ON SHIRTS, ACRYLIC AND COTTON
YARNS AND NYLON FABRICS

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 41(2), I should like to table in both official languages copies of the Textile and Clothing Board Reports respecting men's and boys' shirts, acrylic yarns, cotton yarns, cotton terry towels and towelling, and nylon fabrics.

Mr. Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, before you leave motions, I want to raise a brief point of order, and I do so now instead of on the adjournment motion a few minutes ago. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) has said in the House several times he would make a statement about rail line abandonments, either last week or this week, before the House recesses. Because of the number of prairie communities that will be affected, we should inquire of the House leader or the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) whether someone will be making a statement today so that the people on the prairies will know where they stand before this parliament recesses for Christmas.

[Mr. Rondeau.]

Mr. Speaker: I do not know whether the hon. President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) heard the point of order.

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) and I have been working closely together on this subject, and we are about ready to make an announcement in this connection.

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STATISTICS ACT

AMENDMENT TO REMOVE PENALTIES FOR REFUSAL TO
ANSWER QUESTIONS

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-371, to amend the Statistics Act.

She said: Mr. Speaker, this is a bill amending the Statistics Act to remove the penalties against anyone who refuses to answer a Statistics Canada question, except only those connected with the decennial census. While I hope all Canadians would co-operate with Statistics Canada, I believe those who object on principle to answering personal questions should have the right to do so without being penalized.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

FOOD PRICES

PREDICTION OF INCREASES BY FOOD PRICES REVIEW
BOARD—GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO COUNTERACT

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister a question arising from the prediction of the Food Prices Review Board that food prices are likely to go up by about 16 per cent next year. Does the government believe that this kind of increase is inevitable and justified and, if not, what does the government intend to do to avoid what the Food Prices Review Board is now predicting will happen?

● (1210)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, when we are in the area of conjecture, I of course cannot argue with or contradict these figures. We are hoping to achieve a better performance. The ways that are being followed are the ones the House has been told about many times by the Minister of Finance and myself.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, in view of this prediction and report, is it the intention of the government to launch any kind of intensive inquiry into the structure of the food industry in order to see whether their costs can be reduced or to supply objectives which can be more efficiently and effectively met?