

S. O. 31

The uranium industry is competing in a tough marketplace these days. The ability of our industry to remain competitive will be eroded if a cost recovery plan is implemented. It is much better that the industry's regulatory body continue to be funded from the general revenues of the Government of Canada. This way, there is no possible conflict of interest for inspectors whose services will be paid for directly by the companies. With the world price of uranium at an all-time low, the last thing the government should do at this time is place an additional burden of millions of dollars on the shoulders of this industry.

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[Translation]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Shefford (Mr. Lapierre) wrote to the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mulroney) recently to suggest setting up a common non-partisan fund to save the Meech Lake Accord. The Prime Minister answered him right away that he would look very favorably on such an initiative, saying: "I hope that all those who really care about meeting the challenge of Canada will continue to work in the same spirit. Regaining our unity and developing our prosperity are essential conditions for Canada's present and future influence and standing. I think that we have made great progress in this regard in recent years, but if future generations are to realize their full potential, we must remove the constitutional uncertainty overhanging our future development, starting today."

Mr. Speaker, the answer from our Prime Minister strengthens our hope that the present obstacles will be smoothed out.

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DISASTERS

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Beauséjour): Mr. Speaker, a tragic event has shaken the whole riding of Beauséjour, especially the community of Cormier Village. A fatal accident left 12 people dead and 45 others injured, of whom 7 are in serious condition. This accident is even more tragic because it decimated two families in Cormier Village, the Légers and the McGraws, at their annual gathering. In the face of such a tragedy, it is difficult to find words that really express how we feel. Nevertheless,

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you join me and all other Hon. Members of this House in our prayers for those who are in serious condition, while we wish the other injured people a speedy recovery.

And I am sure too, Mr. Speaker, that you join all of us in this House in offering our sincere condolences to the Léger and McGraw families and wishing them the courage they will need to come through this difficult period.

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[English]

TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the announcement of the Minister of Transport of a royal commission on transportation in Canada. In the meantime, I urge the Minister of Transport to negotiate a separate agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia which would expedite the upgrading of the Trans-Canada Highway between Amherst and Truro.

The cutbacks of CN in Newfoundland resulted in substantial additional highway traffic through Nova Scotia, and the recent VIA announcements will result in even more traffic. This is an acute situation with certain sections of the highway experiencing accident rates sometimes four times the norm and all too often resulting in fatalities.

Nova Scotia is unique by design in that we have only one main highway into and out of the province which accommodates all the traffic for Nova Scotia as well as Newfoundland. An upgrading of this thoroughfare is absolutely essential.

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VIA RAIL

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, on Friday the Minister of Transport rose in this House and tried to justify cutting VIA Rail by 50 per cent across the country by quoting the 7 per cent ridership occupancy rate on one particular train on the Waboden—Churchill run.

What he did not tell this House was that this is not the regular passenger train, it is the way-freight. What he did not tell this House is that this Churchill train is an old combination coach and baggage car built in 1928, with wooden seats and with a thin partition separating passengers from freight. There is no food or beverage