

*Routine Proceedings*

it is after they cease to be a member of the House. They must qualify under the provisions of the act to do so.

I understand the question that is being asked by the hon. member, but I fully expect that the hon. Leader of the Opposition will qualify as a Canadian citizen to receive his pension for many years.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL FORUM ON HEALTH**

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

The Minister of Health has not been able and/or has refused to release the terms of reference for the national health forum. The Prime Minister will be chair of that forum.

• (1500)

Also, if the current cost-sharing between federal, provincial and territorial governments continues there will be no federal funding for health care by the year 2015 and some provinces will not receive federal funding in the life of this Parliament.

Given the above, can the Deputy Prime Minister guarantee on behalf of the government that there will be a rebalancing of cash transfers to provinces and territories to ensure that the principles of the Canada Health Act can be maintained and enforced?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, obviously the Minister of Health and the Prime Minister are working very hard with the provinces to ensure that the process of the forum is in fact a very productive one. That will obviously be one of the issues on the agenda at the forum.

\* \* \*

**AGRICULTURE**

**Mr. Bernie Collins (Souris—Moose Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of agriculture.

In the red book we talked about the whole farm safety net program. When can we expect the government to take action on this commitment and are producers taking part in the process?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food):** Mr. Speaker, in February I convened a meeting in Winnipeg with 40 or 50 farm organizations from across the country in addition to provincial and federal government officials. Their objective was to consider the future need and shape of a national safety net system based upon the whole farm concept that was described in the red book at the time of the election.

A national safety nets committee involving these 40 or 50 farm organizations is now in place. They have been working hard through the spring and early summer. Producers are very much leading the process. Their work is augmented by and co-ordinated with the ongoing work of federal and provincial

officials. Their work has also involved consultations with all members of the House who have on occasion expressed an interest in making representations about the safety net system.

The objective is to have recommendations in place to present to federal and provincial ministers of agriculture when we meet for our regular meeting in July in Winnipeg. Our objective after that is to begin the implementation of the whole farm system by the beginning of 1995.

\* \* \*

**PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Gombosuren, Minister for External Relations of Mongolia.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Speaker:** I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Jerome C. Dill, Minister of Human Affairs and Information of the Government of Bermuda.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to five petitions.

\* \* \*

**WESTERN GRAIN TRANSPORTATION**

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to inform members of the House of the government's plans to address several problems experienced during the current crop year in the transportation of western Canadian grain to market. These actions are intended to help clear up this year's difficulties. Even more important, they will help ensure that those difficulties are not repeated in the next or subsequent crop years.

• (1505)

Members of the House will be aware that significant delays were experienced this year in getting western Canada's grain to market. The reasons for this were several. The flooding of the Mississippi River system forced United States' shippers to turn to other modes of transportation. This tied up rail cars in the United States that would normally have been available for lease to Canadian rail companies. The turnaround time on rail cars in the United States is longer than in Canada. A severe winter limited unloading at country elevators and slowed the movement through the system. A labour dispute on the west coast