

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, contingency plans were being looked at in the event that the ice formation was a lot slower this year than is normally the case. However, the report I received yesterday indicates that is unlikely to be true. Our information is that landing on the ice should be indeed possible by about the middle of November. I really think that hon. members ought not to say that conditions are safe when the expert analysis shows there are significant hazards. Already standards are pushed as close to the limit as possible. It is rather strange that if, as a result of permitting flying, accidents occurred, members would be up on their feet with great vigour protesting that we allowed flying under those circumstances.

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

TRANSFER OF FOOD STOCKS FROM LOBLAWS TO ZIGGY'S— SUGGESTED INVESTIGATION OF JUSTIFICATION FOR PRICE INCREASE

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Yesterday I raised a question in the House in which I indicated that prices in supermarkets in the Sudbury basin were going up as much as 50 per cent. Now, we have a report that one of Canada's largest supermarket chains, Loblaws Limited, is engaging in the practice of changing the name of some of its stores in order to jack up prices. Will the minister consider having his department investigate whether, and under what circumstances, the food which was left in the Loblaws's Pickering Farms store at Yonge and Yorkville Streets, Toronto, which closed October 18, was transferred to Ziggy's, another subsidiary of Loblaws, and whether the 20 per cent mark up is justified?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can respond by saying I saw the same report as the hon. member. We reported this to the Anti-Inflation Board this morning with the request that they investigate it.

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● (1140)

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM—APPLICATION OF PRICE AND PROFIT GUIDELINES TO ASSOCIATED COMPANIES

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): A supplementary to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker. A Loblaws representative has been cited as saying that as other Loblaws stores became uneconomical they might be converted to Ziggy stores, with resultant higher prices. Under the government's anti-inflation legislation, for the purposes of wage guidelines associated companies are lumped together with respect to the 500 employees. Is this the case, also, with respect to the price part of the guidelines? In other words, do Loblaws's Pickering Farms, Ziggy and Loblaws all have different price-cost and profit structures and will they be considered as one company or as separate entities for the purpose of price guidelines?

Oral Questions

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): It would depend, as with all corporate entities, on the nature of the operation. With some we will be able to have a cost pass-through test and with others we will not. In the case of the distribution of business we shall be examining the gross profit margin and determining whether there have been unreasonable mark-ups and for that reason, therefore, whether orders should be made requiring them to roll back prices.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

PARTICIPATION IN MARSHALL CROWE REFERENCE TO FEDERAL COURT—CONTINUATION OF ENERGY BOARD HEARINGS BEFORE DECISION RENDERED

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Justice whether he has now had a chance to look into the question I put to him last week in reference to the case to be heard before the federal court concerning some apprehension as to whether Marshall Crowe, the chairman of the National Energy Board, shows any sign of prejudice because of past involvement in other matters?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice): I have now had a chance to review the matter with my officials and it is the intention of the Attorney General of Canada to participate in those hearings. My officials have been instructed to prepare submissions to be made on my behalf. But it would be premature to make a final decision as to the nature of the position to be taken until November 13, which is the date on which interested parties can move to put in further evidence on the matter.

Mr. Woolliams: It seems strange to me that the hearings are continuing to proceed. I am sure the Minister of Justice has had experience in court when there has been a challenge to a judge because of prejudice. Is the minister going to allow the hearings to continue while the position of the President of the National Energy Board is being challenged as to possible prejudice?

Mr. Basford: I do not think it is my role either to start or stop the hearings. My role is to try to assure that the Attorney General is represented in a federal court hearing in a proper way and that we intend to do.

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FOREIGN INVESTMENT

TAKEOVER OF WESTINGHOUSE BY GENERAL STEEL WARES— REQUEST FOR REPORT ON NEGOTIATIONS AND EXTENSION OF TIME LIMIT

Mr. Bill Kempling (Halton-Wentworth): A question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, Mr. Speaker. Can the hon. gentleman advise the House as to the state of negotiations between the Foreign Investment Review Agency, Westinghouse Canada Limited and General Steel Wares Limited regarding the take-over bid of General