

Oral Questions

service or to increase postal rates. Since the corporation has already announced increases in services, one can only anticipate another increase in postal rates. I wonder if the minister could tell the House whether the people of Canada should anticipate another increase in postal rates in 1982 or early 1983.

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member is being very speculative. I personally have had no such information from the president of the corporation. In any case, the decision whether or not to increase the price of postage stamps now rests with the board of directors of the Canada Post Corporation, and I feel it is much too early to speculate on this one way or another. I think the hon. member is making a mountain out of a hypothetical molehill.

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[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

HIGHWAY SPILLAGES OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. I am sure the Minister of the Environment is aware of my concern about recent rail problems and the spill of hazardous materials into the environment. It has now become apparent that that is only a small part of a major problem, the balance of it being that on the highways of this country there quite clearly are vehicles travelling which are unsafe. We are now told that there has been, on average, one major spill of hazardous material every ten days. What action does the Minister of the Environment propose to take to protect the environment from spills which take place as a result of common carriers not being adequately inspected?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of the Environment and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, there are, through the amendments made to the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, regulations which are being formulated in conjunction with the provinces. I am not sure whether the hon. member is referring to transportation which goes beyond provincial or, indeed, international boundaries, or whether he is discussing simply local transportation within a province or region. If the latter is the case, it would be primarily a provincial concern. If he is concerned about interprovincial transit, there are discussions going on with the provinces with the objective of formulating regulations.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER PROMOTE SAFETY MEASURES

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I know the minister is well aware that I do not care very much where the hazardous material comes from. My only concern is

protection of the environment and protection of the public of Canada.

What specific measures will the minister put forward to the cabinet now that would allow, in the first instance, the province of Ontario to proceed with the regulations it has in place which would require common carriers travelling on the roads of this province to meet certain safety requirements, and what further steps will he take to guarantee that there will be no further delay in the implementation of adequate safety measures to protect both the environment of Canada and the people of Canada from unnecessary spillage of hazardous materials which results from inadequate inspection of common carriers, whether rail or road?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of the Environment and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. gentleman is concerned about safety and hazards to Canadian citizens, and that is a view which is no doubt shared by all hon. members on this side, indeed by all hon. members in the House. I just finished telling the hon. member that, in so far as our jurisdictional responsibilities are concerned, we are moving to meet them. In so far as provincial responsibilities are concerned we are having discussion with the provinces to see that they are met.

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FISHERIES

REPRESENTATIONS CONCERNING UNITED STATES SWORDFISH MARKET

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Madam Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the patient Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. In view of the deplorable depressed state of Atlantic Canada's fishing industry I would like to ask the minister when did he last make representations to Washington in the hope of reopening the potential \$15 million American swordfish market to Canadians.

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, I do not remember the exact date, but certainly within the past year we have tried again to get the U.S. Food and Drug administration to have a second look at this question, or a third or fourth look. I am afraid I cannot report much progress.

REQUEST THAT FURTHER TALKS BE HELD WITH UNITED STATES AUTHORITIES

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Madam Speaker, in my opinion the action taken by Washington of banning swordfish imports is obviously a non-tariff barrier in restraint of trade, since swordfish is available today in practically every state in the United States. Therefore, will the minister discuss this matter with the new United States ambassador to Canada, Mr. Robinson, and will he take this matter up with Washington as well and bring back a report of his findings to this House?