

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development): Madam Speaker, it is true that Mr. McDougall told me he had taken part in the Newfoundland election campaign, and since he was working under contract and was hired under an exchange with the private sector, he was not aware of all administrative practices. I told him he had been unwise, even though it was after working hours, to take part in the Newfoundland election. Since under his contract, he had to be given three months' notice if we wanted to release him from his duties, that is what we did, and, in fact, he himself offered to leave when he realized he had committed an indiscretion.

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HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES**INQUIRY RESPECTING RESULT OF RESEARCH BY NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON UREA FORMALDEHYDE FOAM INSULATION**

Mrs. Eva Côté (Rimouski-Témiscouata): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. It is connected with the question I put to the minister last week on the status of UFFI victims. Could the minister inform the House on the results of work being done with the National Advisory Council on UFFI, since it seems the minister had a meeting with Council representatives over the weekend?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, to answer the hon. member's question, I can report that the National Advisory Council on UFFI has asked me to allow all home owners to remove the foam from their homes, if that was their choice. Saturday, I accepted this recommendation on behalf of the government, which means that during the next few weeks, a task force including representatives of associations of UFFI victims will work in close co-operation with officials from my department to assist home owners who want to remove the product from the walls of their homes this summer. I have therefore decided to change the regulations of the assistance program for UFFI victims to reflect this new aspect. In addition, the courses we are offering contractors will also be offered free to home owners who want to remove the product from their walls themselves.

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[English]

RAILWAYS**GILSON REPORT ON CROWNEST PASS RATES—REQUEST FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Madam Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Transport about the Gilson report, which I understand he will table today after three

o'clock, and which was developed in a sort of Polish government style, behind closed doors, without any public input from grain producers. Will the minister subject the Gilson report to public scrutiny and do as Mr. Justice Emmett Hall did, that is, allow the Standing Committee on Transport and the Standing Committee on Agriculture to hold hearings across western Canada on the Gilson report and its recommendations?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I do not think it is fair to say that representatives of farmers in the west did not take part in the negotiations that took place under Dr. Gilson. Representations have been extensive. There were 67 different groups represented. The next step will see those who took part in negotiations going back to their associations and defending the Gilson report in part or in total. In coming days other ministers and I will similarly meet with representative groups—wheat pools, railways, and all kinds of associations. In the fall we will present a bill on western grain transportation which will be extensively debated in the House and in committee, so I dare say there will be a lot of participation in the process that will lead to the final legislation.

Mr. Benjamin: Madam Speaker, 50 of the 67 organizations that the minister referred to do not grow grain or ship grain that is subject to the statutory rates. This is consultation El Salvador style—on land reform they consult with the land owners, not the land users.

REQUEST THAT RECOMMENDATIONS BE SUBJECTED TO REFERENDUM

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): I have a supplementary question, Madam Speaker. If the minister thinks the Gilson and Snavley reports are so good will he submit them to the grain producers, that is, to those who hold wheat board permits, and allow them to vote on whether they want Mr. Justice Hall's recommendations or the Gilson report recommendations? Let us have no more nonsense such as consulting with outfits that do not grow grain or ship grain that is subject to the statutory grain rates. The minister has deliberately saturated his consulting process with people who are opposed to statutory grain rates, opposed to orderly marketing, and opposed to the Canadian Wheat Board. That is what he has built this stacked deck on, with the Gilson report. Will he submit the question to a referendum—Mr. Justice Hall's report or the Gilson report, which one?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, most of the farm leaders who attended the negotiations are elected on an annual basis, so it must be terribly difficult to be the leader of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool or the Alberta Wheat Pool and not represent the will of the members of those pools. If anything, they are more in the hands of their members than we are in the hands of the electors.