

from some of the premiers, I should like him to follow through on the suggestion that he made yesterday and table all the correspondence on the subject between him or his officials and the provincial governments. I refer in particular to a strong letter from Premier Schreyer which was in direct opposition to the position the minister has taken.

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to that after following the usual procedure of getting their permission.

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HEALTH

POSSIBLE ACTION TO AID LOW INCOME FAMILIES IN VIEW OF ELIMINATION OF MILK SUBSIDY

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the elimination of the subsidy on milk, what steps does the government propose to take to ensure that Canadian children, especially children of low income families, will not be deprived of this very essential element of their diet?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will have to follow the debates during this session to find out which measures will be proposed. I merely wish to remind him that family allowances will be raised next January in line with the increase in the cost of living.

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

INQUIRY INTO SHORTAGE OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF REPORT

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Could he advise the House whether an investigation is being or has been carried out to discover the reason behind the shortage in building materials and household appliances which occurred during the summer of 1974 and which is still being felt in some areas?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Laprise: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. minister has stated that an investigation has been made. Will he table soon a report concerning this?

Mr. Ouellet: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, if it is indicated.

Oral Questions

● (1120)

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SUGGESTED REFORM OF PROCEDURES—GUIDELINES ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION—REQUEST FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether my question should be directed to the Prime Minister or the government House leader. It has to do both with the comment in the Speech from the Throne about parliamentary reform and the Prime Minister's own comments yesterday afternoon in the Throne Speech debate. My question concerns some items which were not mentioned by the Prime Minister but which are ultimately important to any parliamentary reform. It relates to the business of supply and the control of expenditure of parliament as well as the cold question of access to information referred to by the Leader of the Opposition. Could the Prime Minister or the government House leader indicate whether these will be subjects for discussion when parliament considers these matters. Also, will there be opportunity for well informed members of the general public to make submissions on a matter which is vitally important to members of this institution and, ultimately, to the Canadian people?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, answering the first part of the question, I am convinced that the Leader of the House will be prepared to look at any constructive suggestion made by the opposition and by government supporters for improving procedures of the House. Dealing with the second part, the hon. member will no doubt recall that in the last parliament we tabled guidelines, which we thought were useful ones, which tried to combine the right of parliament and people to know with the right, the necessity, of the government to keep certain types of papers confidential. These guidelines and rules were referred to a committee of the House, which did not report in the last parliament. I hope that it will resume its work in the present parliament.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the Prime Minister will recall that there was not much opportunity either for the committee or the general public to respond to the guidelines which were merely a consolidation of accepted practice, and the practice was not too widely accepted, at that. My supplementary relates to the second part of my question. I asked the Prime Minister if there will be an opportunity for views to be expressed by those who are concerned about the nature of parliamentary reform. Will there be an opportunity for the parliamentary committee to receive such submissions, and will there be full public discussion of the nature and extent of reforms which may take place in the thirtieth parliament?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, may I attempt to answer this part of the question. I have had informal talks with the leaders of the various parties in the House. We decided tentatively that before referring reform to a committee of the House there should be some consensus between the parties on how to deal with these difficult questions. I am sure the hon.