

*Oral Questions*

\$15 hockey tickets to inmates, to enable them to attend hockey games?

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the tickets were bought by the penitentiary service. What we are trying to do in the penitentiary system is set up a series of incentives—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Allmand:**—whereby men can earn privileges like these from time to time. It is regrettable that this incident happened. On the whole, as I pointed out last year, we issued 63,000 temporary absence passes and less than one half of one per cent ended in failure.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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**HIGHWAYS****FORT NELSON-FORT SIMPSON ROAD—INQUIRY AS TO COMPLETION OF FEDERAL PORTION**

**Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Is he aware of a statement made by the Minister of Highways in the province of British Columbia recently regarding the Fort Nelson-Fort Simpson Road? Has the minister now, in light of that commitment by the provincial government of B.C. to immediately begin construction of their portion of the highway, realigned his priorities and committed the federal government to complete that section of the road that is under federal jurisdiction?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to note that the government of British Columbia has again changed its mind, but I am in a rather difficult position, since it had stated last fall that nothing would be done. I therefore set up the departmental priorities accordingly but since the government of British Columbia has changed its mind, I will reconsider the problem. However, I cannot promise to alter this year our construction plans in the North. If they had not changed their minds, I would not have to change our plans.

[English]

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

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**AGRICULTURE****POSSIBLE PHASING OUT OF PRAIRIE FARM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM—GOVERNMENT POSITION ON CROP INSURANCE**

**Mr. Bill Knight (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. I wonder if the minister can inform the House whether or not the government intends to carry on with the Prairie Farm Assistance Act program this year in light of the moves which have

[Mr. Reynolds.]

been made in relation to crop insurance. Last year a conflict developed in that many producers bought crop insurance, realizing that if they gained anything under it they could not collect from PFAA. Can the minister inform us about the future of the PFAA program this year?

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, it is still our intention to follow up the announcement of the government in 1972 that PFAA would be phased out. The program is only being carried out in one or two parts of the province of Alberta this year. Crop insurance is what we advise people to take out.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I remind hon. members that there are too many supplementaries. I am trying to see as many members as possible before the end of the question period.

**POSSIBLE USE OF PRAIRIE FARM ASSISTANCE FUND AS DISASTER FUND**

**Mr. Bill Knight (Assiniboia):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the Prairie Farm Emergency Fund under PFAA now contains some \$14,910,000, can the minister inform the House if this fund is to be revised, in the sense that it is to be used as a disaster fund, as farmers all across southern Saskatchewan and Alberta face the real possibility of drought and a grasshopper plague this coming year.

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, a disaster fund is probably a very good suggestion. When you check the record as to what the government has paid out in disaster areas in which farmers have not taken out crop insurance and where PFAA has been inadequate, you will see that the fund certainly could be useful.

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● (1600)

**TRANSPORT****SAFETY REGULATIONS FOR SMALL BOATS—POSSIBLE MEETING BETWEEN MINISTER AND OPERATORS TO DISCUSS CHANGES**

**Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of Transport. It is following up on one I asked him recently. Can the minister inform the House if he will have the regulations governing passenger ships amended so that small boats operated for pleasure, such as taking people out sports fishing, will not come under the regulations which require such vessels to carry self-inflatable life rafts, provided the other safety regulations are not diminished? In this connection, will the minister have the officials of his department meet with the operators to see if some common ground can be arrived at?

**Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, since we can make regulations, there is no doubt we can change them. The problem is whether it is wise. Will changing the regulations show the people in those craft how to swim? We must make inquiries to ensure that