

*Oral Questions*REQUEST THAT AGREEMENT TERMS BE REFERRED TO
STANDING COMMITTEE

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, in a letter to my colleague, the Hon. Member for Selkirk-Interlake, dated October 18, the Minister of National Defence indicated that the umbrella agreement would be signed within a few weeks. I would like the Minister to comment on that. Furthermore, will the Minister honour the promise made by his predecessor, sitting nearby in disguise, at the meeting of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence on March 24, 1982? As reported at page 22 of the Minutes, the Minister stated:

—there is no reason why we cannot reveal not only the fact of the agreement but all of the terms of the agreement as soon as the negotiations are completed—

Before any other agreements with regard to Cruise missile testing or anything else are entered into, will the Minister give a reference to the Standing Committee outlining all of the terms of the framework agreement, the letter from President Reagan to the Prime Minister asking for it in the first place, and the Prime Minister's reply, and all of the terms before any negotiations for Cruise testing are undertaken?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs): The first answer, Madam Speaker, is that it may be possible that the negotiations for the umbrella agreement will be completed within a few weeks. I am not certain because new items have been raised within the last short time which must be dealt with before any agreement can be signed.

Miss Jewett: Like public opinion.

Mr. MacEachen: On the second question, I will look at the commitment made by my predecessor. If the Hon. Member has quoted him correctly, it seems to be a reasonable commitment and I would be happy to follow his wise leadership on this point.

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[Translation]

CANADIAN HOME INSULATION PROGRAM

ALLEGED THEFT OF SUBSIDIES

Mr. Alexandre Cyr (Gaspé): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In recent months, travelling salesmen have been going from door to door in the Gaspé and in a number of other areas throughout Canada, selling insulation at \$20 a bag, while the same material is available from local dealers at \$9. They are selling weather-stripping for \$100, while the same product can be purchased for \$30. The customer's bill is always for \$350 and is charged to the grants provided by the Canadian Home Insulation Program. Many homeowners buy these products without really knowing what to do with them. They pass them on to their neighbours, use them to insulate cottages or

garages or leave them lying around in their backyards. My question is: can the Minister inform the House whether his government is going to stand any longer for this fraudulent use of CHIP grants, especially since the money involved would be far better spent on creating jobs in the riding of Gaspé, where the unemployment rate is 50 per cent?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, yesterday when I was answering questions in the House, I said that I was going to review this program. I agree there are people who are misusing the system and taxpayers' money. I am going to try to combine some of these programs to ensure that we get the desired results; in other words, conserve energy and at the same time prevent fraud, while the people taking advantage of these programs will pay part of the cost instead of receiving the full amount from the government.

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[English]

RAILWAYS

USE OF ANNOUNCED FUNDS

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Madam Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Transport. Could the Minister explain to the House the application of the \$400 million, to which reference was made in the Finance Minister's statement this week, with respect to the expansion and modernization of rail capacity? Is this sum of \$400 million to be used a grant, an advance, part of the Crow solution process or part of the Western Development Fund, or both?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, unfortunately I cannot be very explicit this morning. By the way, I am grateful to the Minister of Finance for having made this amount available, on top of previously announced amounts of money in order to bring about the resolution of the Crowsnest Pass rate and to bring about tremendous expansion of western rail transportation capacity. In due course I will state where each one of these dollars will be going, but I am not in a position to do so at this moment. However, the decision certainly indicates the dedication of the Government to the resolution of the problem and to the expansion of railway service in the West.

REQUEST FOR JOB-CREATION ESTIMATE

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Is the Minister in a position to clarify to the House whether this sum of \$400 million is part of the grant or subsidy package, or is it simply an advance to the railways to accelerate the development of rail capacity? I think that is a very important question. If so, what will it mean in terms of jobs and when will these jobs come on stream?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): That is exactly what I cannot answer this morning. I just said that.