

to eliminate or significantly reduce this social cancer in our country?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. friend for a very excellent question. He quite correctly points out that the UN World Summit, which will be co-chaired by the Prime Minister, represents a vital advance for the children of the world. This will be the largest get-together of world leaders since the Vienna Congress in 1814.

One of the goals of the summit will be to plan a concerted attack on world poverty among children. One of the commitments of this government is to continue to do everything that we can to reduce the rate of poverty among children.

I am pleased to be able to tell the hon. member that since 1984 we have been able to reduce by over a quarter of a million, the number of children who are living under the low income cutoffs. We are determined to continue to keep that effort and do everything that we can to reduce the level even further.

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, very sadly, there are at least one million Canadian children who are poor and dying. We cannot long endure their continued loss to ignorance, abuse, and ill health. The length of lineups to food banks now extends from Ottawa to New York. In Winnipeg alone, the lineup to food banks has swelled by 30 per cent in the last year.

The Manitoba Child Care Association echoes the fear of all day care supporters across the country, that thousands of children are at risk in life and in health due to an inadequate child care system in the country.

When will this government start providing the now long overdue universal affordable day care to children of Canadian families?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, on the subject of child poverty, I believe that we have done well but I believe that we can do better in Canada. That is the commitment that we make. We are committed to introducing a child care policy during the life of this Parliament.

In addition, the hon. member could be very helpful to all of us who are committed to providing assistance for Canada's children. As he is aware, at the present time before the Senate there is legislation that provides for a \$500 million increase in parental benefits for parental

leave under unemployment insurance reforms. He could be exceptionally helpful if he would ask the Liberal senators to pass that legislation without further delay.

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AIR CANADA

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State for Transport.

Air Canada has confirmed plans to lay off at least 2,300 employees and rumours suggest that the number may be as high as 3,000. There is also every indication that Air Canada will eliminate several so-called unprofitable routes.

What action will the minister and the government take to protect those jobs and to protect Air Canada service to those communities where it is threatened?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member on his nomination as transportation critic.

In answer to his question, I will remind him that Air Canada is now a private company that operates under market laws and therefore has to conform with the demands.

We will certainly make sure that all employees who will have to be laid off, if there are any layoffs, are properly treated.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture.

Canadian farmers have been left in the position of sitting on a very good crop with excellent quality facing U.S. subsidies which have exceeded \$55 per tonne, a change from the days when they were offering \$5 and \$7 per tonne.

While this contradicts my reading of the Canada-U.S. trade agreement where they had agreed not to offer those subsidies to third countries, I am wondering what the government has done about the reports that Congress is now very close to changing the trade law to