

Oral Questions

and functioning of microwave ovens are established under the Radiation Emitting Devices Act. We have issued a pamphlet on the question of microwave ovens, which is updated regularly. Standards are reviewed constantly, according to research results arrived at either in Canada or abroad.

At this point in time, I would like to assure Canadians because, as the hon. member has said, it is Christmas shopping time, there is no reason for concern about any additional, new danger with regard to microwave ovens. I am satisfied that the standards we have issued in the department are sufficient.

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware that the Canadian standards allow levels of microwave radiation that are 1,000 times higher than the standards set by the Soviet Union, and that it has been alleged that our standards allow a certain level of emission only because Canadian measuring instruments are not technically proficient enough to measure smaller levels of emission?

Miss Bégin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the hon. member that the media in Canada for years has used the U.S.S.R.'s unknown research data to spread the rumour that there are great dangers associated with microwave ovens. However, nobody has ever been able to ascertain what the results of that data from the U.S.S.R. are all about. We know that the National Research Council standards are much more restrictive than those used in other western industrialized countries, including the United States. The National Research Council of Canada recently announced that they are initiating a new study in order to explore the question further.

● (1442)

SAFETY STANDARDS FOR RADIATION FROM ELECTRICAL LINES
AND MICROWAVE LINES

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question concerning radiation from electrical power lines as well as microwave transmission lines. Can the minister inform the House whether her department has made any progress toward the establishment of safety standards governing radiation from electrical lines and microwave transmission lines?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I would prefer to have a day to obtain an update on that subject. I will answer the hon. member tomorrow or the day after.

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CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

SPUR LINE AT MALTON, ONT.—ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT ON
NEARBY HOMES

Mr. Paul McCrossan (York-Scarborough): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport, of which I have given him notice: it concerns an article in the *Globe and Mail* today on the planned CNR spur line at Malton which could have serious environmental consequences for area homes.

[Miss Bégin.]

In view of the fact that the CNR did undertake an environmental design study on the project but withheld its findings until work on the spur line had already begun, will the minister ask the CNR to delay further construction until the independent study being financed by the municipality is completed next week? Will the minister instruct the CNR to meet with the Peel regional council to consider possible alternatives which would cause less disruption for the 4,000 people in northern Malton?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly take the representation of the hon. member under advisement and consider whether there is any action I should properly take in this regard. I should say, however, in fairness to the CN, that it should be observed that before these houses were located in this particular place, the CNR considered that it was unwise to open up the subdivision for this development because of its operations. It made its view of the problem known at the time, but it was overridden by other decision-making bodies.

Mr. McCrossan: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of State (Environment). The ministry of environment for the province of Ontario recommended in August, 1974, that the CNR rail lines immediately north of Malton be relocated because of the likelihood of increased traffic and the noise levels which prevailed at that time. In 1975, the ministry again criticized the CNR for its failure to provide any public participation program in its study.

Could the minister explain to the House why Environment Canada approved the 1977 environmental design report for the project which provided the authority for the CNR to go ahead, despite the environmental violence the spur line would bring to the citizens living in northern Malton?

Hon. Len Marchand (Minister of State (Environment)): Mr. Speaker, with respect to that particular question, I will take it as notice.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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GRAIN

SUGGESTION FEED GRAINS BE UNDER SOLE JURISDICTION OF
WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board. In view of the fact that two commissioners of the board have said that the open market feed grains policy is congesting elevator space and undermining the board's marketing activities, in view of the fact there is enough private enterprise feed grain in Thunder Bay right now to fill the domestic market for the rest of the winter, occupying 15.5 per cent of the space at Thunder Bay at a time when the Wheat Board is short of board stocks, and because there is unrestricted delivery of non-board feed grain which is destroying the