

Oral Questions

[Translation]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR MINISTER'S INTERVENTION SO GREATER IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO FRENCH NEWS SERVICE

Mr. Jacques Lavoie (Hochelaga): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State responsible for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. In light of conversations I have had with CBC French network reporters and following a CBC program explaining that there seemed to be a lack of reporters for French information and that the air time was not sufficient to allow broadcasting of more elaborate information concerning French Canadians, could the minister tell the House whether he intends to communicate with the president of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in order to solve this problem?

Hon. John Roberts (Secretary of State): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am always willing to inform the president of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation of the representations made to me by hon. members and I will refer this one to him as soon as possible.

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TRANSPORT

RAISING OF FARES ON SUBURBAN MONTREAL TRAINS—ANSWER OF CNR CONCERNING REDUCTION OF SERVICE

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Two months ago I had occasion to put a question to the minister on behalf of the thousands of commuters in the Montreal area, urging him to intervene in a decision the Canadian National already seemed to have made at that time. Last week, the parliamentary secretary stated that, in view of the Gascon report, the minister had agreed to ask officially the CN president for a moratorium of one year and a drastic cut in the increases foreseen for users of commuter trains. Can the minister now tell us what the answer of the CN president was, the matter being urgent as January 1 will soon be here?

[English]

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I have not yet received a reply from Canadian National but, as the hon. member says, following representations from several Liberal members of parliament I did say to the CN that I thought, in view of the Gascon report, they should consider postponing their reduction of service for another period of time, recognizing that in this area which is a provincial and municipal responsibility, such further period of time would likely be the last period of grace given for decisions by the province and the municipality with regard to the commuter train arrangement.

[Mr. Roberts.]

[Translation]

Mr. La Salle: Can the minister at least promise to urge the CN to make a decision following the representations of the minister, as the January 1 deadline is drawing near, and can he say as well since he speaks of lower cuts—I believe the planned increases could have been as high as 50 per cent of current rates—whether he gave a figure to the CN, or can he at least assure us that the increase will not exceed the inflation rate foreseen by his own government?

[English]

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, I cannot do that at this time because I do not have a reply from Canadian National. I expect it very soon. Obviously, we are working against a deadline date because the changes were to have taken effect on January 1. I would like an answer almost at once.

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[Translation]

SPORTS

POSSIBLE MERGER OF NHL WITH WHA—MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, because there is a strong possibility that the National Hockey League and the World Hockey Association will merge, because three of the teams in the WHA are Canadian, and because having five Canadian teams in the new professional hockey association would certainly add to the prestige of Canada, can the Minister of State for Sports tell us whether she is in favour of Edmonton, Winnipeg and Quebec city entering teams in the NHL and whether she has taken steps in that regard?

[English]

Hon. Iona Campagnolo (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport)): Mr. Speaker, I wish it were possible for me to give a pro answer to the hon. gentleman but, as he knows, we are talking about professional hockey which, of course, is big business and they will settle the matter amongst themselves without any involvement from amateur sport.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

EFFECT OF BILL C-14

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Employment and Immigration, who will know that last night, in the debate on Bill C-14, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport and the Liberal member for South Western Nova both opposed important elements of Bill C-14 now before the House.

In the course of an answer to my colleague, the hon. member for Halifax-Dartmouth East, the member of parliament for South Western Nova said, "I am sure he realizes the final bill is not here". I wonder if the minister can tell the