

which Premier Grant Devine had spoken of, but it does not in any way refer to an agreement.

Surely we are in a very real sense wasting the time of this House in discussing a matter that is properly before the courts in the province of Saskatchewan, and it will be concluded there.

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, first of all, it is going to be very interesting to see if the judge indeed makes a decision as to who is not telling the truth here.

My real question is: Did the Prime Minister know? As well, in his affidavit, the Minister of the Environment admitted in several instances that he attempted to influence the panel. Under section 22(b) of the EARP guidelines it specifically states that the panel should be free of interference.

My question to the Deputy Prime Minister is that the actions of the minister are akin to jury tampering. Can this government assure us that the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Just a moment. The hon. member may have his own opinion as to these entire proceedings but, as I had to say to another member earlier, those opinions cannot be by way of accusations in this House. If the hon. member wishes to put a question and make it a careful question that the government is in a position to respond to and does not stray into accusations and charges, then I will hear the hon. member.

Mr. de Jong: If I may, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment, in his own affidavit, stated that he made several attempts to communicate with the panel and to get the panel to agree to certain timetables. This, we maintain, is contrary to the EARP guidelines.

My question therefore is as follows: Can this government assure us that the minister's resignation will be sought immediately, at least until this matter is cleared up?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Abitibi.

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[*Translation*]

RAILWAY TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Repairs

on the CN Franquet–Chapais railway line in Abitibi have been completed since June 29, 1990. Mining companies in Chapais and Chibougamau have asked CN management in Montreal to run ore shipments on this line right away.

Mr. Speaker, my question is this: Does the Minister think it is economically sound to keep shipping the ore via a 700-mile detour that is no longer necessary? If not, will the minister urge CN management to take action as requested by these mining companies, as soon as possible?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, CN has appealed the decision. There is a procedure that must be followed in such cases. I do not and I must not get involved in the daily operations of this Crown corporation.

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QUEBEC'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. On the weekend, the Quebec wing of the Progressive Conservative Party approved a resolution recognizing Quebec's right to self-determination. This right forms the basis of a movement towards sovereignty that is taking place now in Quebec. My question is this: Does the government endorse this resolution by the party's Quebec wing?

An hon. member: Very good question!

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, in fact—

Mr. Speaker: Order! One moment please! This is not a question about government administration.

The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean, on a supplementary.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. This is the fundamental issue on which the future of this country depends. Would the House of Commons not be interested in a fundamental right that will determine the future of Canada and Quebec, Mr. Speaker? This is an essential issue that will loom large in the background of all political parties in Canada and Quebec during the coming year. I think that—