

home renters and whether or not he will deal with the matter in some way?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the government's concern was reflected in the legislation just introduced to which the hon. member referred.

Mr. Lewis: I think the Minister of Finance ought to know better than to suggest that the legislation deals with the matter. May I ask the minister responsible for housing whether it is his intention to make certain, even though conventional mortgages in the private market may go up, that the mortgage rate under the National Housing Act through Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation will be kept at least at its present high level and will not be permitted to go up?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the interest rate under the National Housing Act will be set in accordance with the law passed by Parliament.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister, in view of the fact that his answer gives no assurance to anyone in the House or any home buyer or renter in the country—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member will appreciate that that is debate. He has sought and been granted the floor for a supplementary, not for debate.

Mr. Lewis: Will the minister make certain that the law of Parliament will be so applied that the present high level of the mortgage interest rate under the National Housing Act will not go up further?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That is a representation.

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[Translation]

PENSIONS

OLD AGE SECURITY—ALLEGED INTENTION OF QUEBEC GOVERNMENT TO CLAIM PART OF RECENT INCREASE—DISCUSSION BETWEEN FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Has he been in touch with the Quebec government regarding the increase in the old age security pension of \$15 a month? Recently, I told the minister that Quebec was getting ready to tamper with that increase, and the fact—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Would the hon. member ask his question?

Mr. Caouette: Yes, Mr. Speaker, but I would like the minister to be well aware of the facts.

Has the minister been in touch with the Quebec authorities and is he well aware that this province is getting ready to use these amounts paid by the federal government?

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member must ask a question and not make allegations. In any case, I would say that the question has now been asked and the minister could try to reply to it.

[English]

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Affairs in Quebec has made no representations to me directly concerning old age pensions. I have read in the press certain expressions alleged to have been made by him, and that is all.

[Translation]

OLD AGE SECURITY—INQUIRY RESPECTING PAYMENT OF INCREASE TO PENSIONERS OR PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question.

Will these additional amounts paid in Quebec as well as everywhere else, be sent directly to the pensioners or to the provincial governments?

[English]

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): The amount is paid directly to the beneficiary.

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POST OFFICE

REQUEST FOR ACTION TO IMPROVE SERVICE IN RURAL MANITOBA

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, I intended to direct a question to the Postmaster General but in his absence I will direct it to the parliamentary secretary or to an acting minister. Since postal services in the rural areas of Manitoba leave much to be desired in terms of efficiency, I should like to know whether any action has been taken on a letter I sent the department on May 5 in which I urged the government to look into rural postal services. If the government has done so, what steps is it prepared to take in order to speed up postal services to rural points in Manitoba?

Mr. Gerald Richard Cobbe (Parliamentary Secretary to Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, without accepting the premise of the question may I say I will look into the matter. I have not been informed of the letter being received but I will check into it and report to the hon. member.

Mr. Murta: I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Since it appears, at least to a great many people, that any efficiency that has been gained in city postal service has been gained at the expense of the rural areas—

• (1450)

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member cannot make a statement; he can ask a question. All hon. members, I suggest, should look at the precedents and citations on the matter of questions. There are many things that cannot be