

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary.

Could the minister tell us if he intends to make such a recommendation to the cabinet to allow for the implementation of a larger number of projects proposed by the youth. They have gone through the trouble of submitting them and those projects should be approved by the Opportunities for Youth Program.

[English]

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, I think the earlier comment by the Prime Minister in response to a question by the hon. Leader of the Opposition would apply here in terms of allocating more funds. May I also add that we are seeking assistance of the private sector in doing everything possible to expedite the connection between young people seeking jobs and those employers who have vacancies, with more special emphasis this year than in the past.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—ADJUSTMENT OF ALLOCATIONS TO EASTERN PROVINCES

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration with regard to the original allocations circulated roughly a month or five weeks ago. In view of considerable representations from some of the eastern provinces which have been severely cut on a relative basis over last year, will the minister indicate whether reconsideration has been given to the allocations and whether any readjustment of allocations has subsequently been made?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, I believe, we were going to make a final adjustment based on more current information on job availability versus youth population in various parts of the country, based on February figures which were updated from the ones on which we based our original allocations. The net result of all this is that there will be increases in the allocations to the Atlantic provinces and Quebec, and I believe one other province, but at the moment I cannot remember which one it is.

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TRANSPORT

INQUIRY RESPECTING DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW OF CROWSNEST PASS FREIGHT RATES—CLEARING OF SNOW FROM TRACKS TO EXPEDITE GRAIN MOVEMENT

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of Transport. Is it a fact that a review is now taking place in government circles, in particular in his own department, concerning the Crowsnest Pass freight rates, and that the feeling within the department is that they should be altered and that the Crowsnest Pass agreement can no longer be kept in effect?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Surely not, to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker.

[Mr. Andras.]

Mr. Stanfield: Does Joe know anything about that?

● (1440)

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, possibly the minister might look into that and find out because there is a press report by a most reliable press man, Mr. Nick Hills—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am not sure in what way the right hon. gentleman wishes to ask the supplementary question but he knows it is not regular to ask a minister to confirm or deny a press report.

Mr. Diefenbaker: You know, Mr. Speaker, when the government does not know what is going on in its own departments, sometimes it is helpful for an opposition member to draw their attention to the facts. I would also ask the amiable minister whether or not he will get in touch with Canadian National Railways in order to ensure that the railway tracks will be cleared of snow, some of which recently were covered completely. Dayliners operate on these tracks. Would he see to this because this is a very serious matter in Saskatchewan, where it is anticipated that flooding will be worse than in previous years, so that as much wheat as possible will be moved before the break-up?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, on account of the presentation of the right hon. gentleman I can tell him that I intend to meet with the president of the CNR this afternoon at 3.30 and this is the first question I will raise.

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AGRICULTURE

REPORTED INCREASE IN FARM LOAN INTEREST RATES—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT

Mr. William C. Frank (Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. In light of reports that farm credit loan interest rates have now gone up to 8½ per cent from 7 per cent, and in light of the fact that the minister's request for an increase in the total loan fund has not been approved by his cabinet colleague, the President of the Treasury Board, is the minister now prepared to make a statement on motions on this matter?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Farm Credit Corporation is operating in a normal manner. It is operating at capacity. There has been no slowdown in the handling of applications. The corporation has the funds with which to operate and it will continue to do so.

Mr. Frank: Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that the minister has been travelling back and forth across Canada expounding on the necessity of encouraging young people to enter agriculture, or of at least maintaining those now so engaged, is this action by the minister of raising the interest rates not contradictory?

Mr. Whelan: No, Mr. Speaker.