

Oral Questions

acted on a means to invade a provincial jurisdiction, it had the absolute, firm and concrete agreement of all the provinces?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I gave enough notice to the government of Quebec of our plans. We were not interfering in provincial fields; we were offering them compensation. We have the right to do what we want with our taxes, because that is our jurisdiction. What we are doing is reducing the taxes in Quebec at this time; we are reducing the income tax in Quebec as we have in other provinces. If Mr. Parizeau wants to get the money back, he can raise his taxes, as all the other treasurers did and as I did when I introduced my budget.

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TRANSPORT**SLOW MOVEMENT OF GRAIN THROUGH VANCOUVER AND PRINCE RUPERT, B.C.**

Mr. Arnold Malone (Battle River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. I should like to ask him if he would reverse his position of blaming the shipping companies for the slowdown in the movement of grain from the port of Vancouver and the port of Prince Rupert, in view of the fact that J.S. MacInnes, president of the Vancouver-based North Pacific Shipping Company, says there is clearly poor communication between ships coming from China and that the fault lies in the fact that there is not enough grain in the grain elevators at those ports.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, once again the hon. member made a false statement in his opening remarks. I did not say that it was the ships and only the ships, but I did indicate that part of our problem with the delay on the west coast was the delay in ship arrivals during December and into January. I have the evidence of the Canadian Wheat Board's telegram in that regard.

Subsequent to that time, the fact that we had a record program, a very, very full program under way meant that it would be very difficult to catch up in the short period of time. In addition to that, we had great difficulties on the prairies with snowfalls, particularly as far as Canadian Pacific lines were concerned. We had some bridge outages which interfered with ordinary performance and stopped us catching up faster.

Mr. Malone: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. If the minister is taking the position that the fault is not with the ships, how can he justify the 13 ships that are waiting, costing some \$4,000 per day in demurrage charges, and the fact that berths in the ports of Vancouver and Prince Rupert are one-third empty and lack of certain grades of grain for shipment is causing this? What steps is the minister taking to rectify the movement of grain from the prairies to the ports so that these ships can be filled?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, any precise figure on demurrage is completely imaginary; the hon. member knows that. The position I am taking is that without doubt the Canadian Wheat

[Mr. Clark.]

Board is doing the best job possible to encourage the right kind of grain to be in Vancouver at the time the ships arrive.

The railways have been trying to put additional railway cars into the movement. I am not satisfied with their performance in total, but I recognize they are under severe pressure. This year, for instance, there is a great movement of potash; the usual movement of cars from potash to grain may not occur, so our difficulties will continue. It is important to recognize that this is all happening in the face of moving probably a record volume of grain out of the country in the course of this year.

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POINT OF ORDER**MR. STEVENS—BILL C-56**

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Yesterday the hon. member for York-Simcoe, by way of a point of order, raised a concern about the relationship between the present Bill C-56 and the ways and means motion which preceded it. We have given the matter very careful and extensive study. I regret at the moment that I am unable to finalize the ruling on the point of order. It has raised a number of considerations.

● (1502)

I do not think there is much difficulty in the relationship between the ways and means motion and the measure, since the measure does not propose a tax increase but a tax reduction, and the question is whether a ways and means motion is in fact required. Therefore, the whole general relationship between the two has brought into focus a matter which requires considerable study. We are doing that. I want to assure the House that we worked at it all morning. However, it will require more time before we can finalize it. I will try to do it as expeditiously as possible. If I do not do it later this day I would indicate as soon as possible to the House when I will do it, probably by tomorrow at noon.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**WEEKLY STATEMENT**

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Could I ask the government House leader the usual business question? Perhaps I may preface it with this remark. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in his press conference last week indicated that it was his expectation that parliament would be adjourning, or this part of the parliamentary session would end, on June 30. This was either his expectation or his hope. I assume that he was not just speaking for himself but on behalf of the government. Given that situation, and given the legislative program which is at least potentially before us on the order paper, is the minister in a position, on behalf of the government, to indicate to us if that expectation is to be met? Specifically, what pieces of legisla-