

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Supplementary Order Paper

Wednesday, the 1st Day of August 1973

QUESTIONS AND REPLIES

[Covering period 12 July-25 July]

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Transferred on dates shown

Skope Storage Heaters

1. Mr WILLIAMS (Wairarapa) asked the Minister of Trade and Industry, Can he advise whether it is competent for an electrical retailer to charge for the conversion of Skope storage heaters from wax-filled to sand-filled tubes when the manufacturers admit a design weakness and have advised owners of Skope storage heaters to switch them off until the alterations have been effected?

Hon. W. W. FREER (Minister of Trade and Industry) replied, This matter is sub judice because of pending litigation proceedings. Since one of the matters on which the court has to reach a decision in this case is whether these heaters are unsafe, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on the matter. In any event the question of whether the manufacturer might be required to defray the cost of converting these heaters does not come within the scope of any legislation administered by my department. It is a matter of civil liability between the company and the buyers of the heaters. However, this is an aspect on which the results of the litigation now in progress might throw some light. I would, however, endorse the manufacturer's advice and I would strongly recommend that owners of Skope storage heaters switch them off until the alterations have been effected.

(12/7/73)

Bonus Bond Draw

2. Mr BLANCHFIELD (West Coast) asked the Postmaster-General, Is it a fact that in the June bonus bond draw the first three prizes were won by numbers in the 385, 386, and 387 groups, and the sixth prize by a number in the 382 group; and can he allay fears of investors that such a unique occurrence was no fault of the computer system used?

Hon. R. O. DOUGLAS (Postmaster-General) replied, Yes, it is a fact that in the June bonus bond draw the first three prizes were won by numbers in the 385, 386, and 387 groups, and the sixth prize by a number in the 382 group. Tests conducted before the draw established that the numbers being selected were randomly distributed and a certificate to this effect was issued by the University of Otago and displayed at the prize draw. These tests confirmed that each \$1 bonus bond unit has an equal chance of winning a prize in any draw for which it is eligible.

(12/7/73)

Rail Freight Subsidies, West Coast

3. Mr GAIR (North Shore) asked the Minister of Trade and Industry, (1) What applications have been received from which West Coast organisations for rail freight subsidies under the recently announced policy of the Labour Government to assist manufacturers in some areas with transport of finished products to northern markets; (2) what firms have so far received support under this programme?

Hon. W. W. FREER (Minister of Trade and Industry) replied, (1) Two formal applications for regional development incentives, including assistance with freight costs, are under consideration by the West Coast Regional Development Council. The council has also received a number of preliminary inquiries from companies interested in the Government's regional development programme. It would not be appropriate for me to name the organisations concerned as their submissions are confidential. (2) No individual company has so far been granted a direct freight subsidy but many South Island manufacturers are already benefiting from the unit rate scheme which came into operation on 28 May.

(12/7/73)