HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, September 18, 1985

The House met at 2 p.m.

• (1405)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 22

[Translation]

INDUSTRY

NEED FOR RENEWAL OF QUOTAS ON IMPORTATION OF SHOES

Mr. Alain Tardif (Richmond-Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, since current footwear quotas are about to expire, it has become imperative for the Government to renew import quotas so as to ensure that Canadian manufacturers will corner 50 per cent of the market over the next five years.

As a matter of fact, the Prime Minister made that commitment in Sherbrooke during the election campaign.

For a number of reasons quotas in the footwear industry are an absolute necessity. Among other things they guarantee 20,000 jobs equitably shared by Ontario and Quebec. They protect the interests of consumers, ensure the survival of the regional economy and might create many new jobs.

Last week Parliament Hill was the site of a gathering of a good many businessmen, employees and union leaders, here to convey to us a very clear message: We want to remain in operation, we want to keep our jobs, we need five-year quotas and 50 per cent of the market.

Do not let them down and deliver the goods as you promised during the election campaign by implementing quotas to guarantee 50 per cent of the market for the next five years.

[English]

AGRICULTURE

MANITOBA CATTLE PRODUCERS—NEED FOR PROVINCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Lee Clark (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, as Members of this House know, many western Canadian farmers were hit very hard this summer by a combination of drought and grasshoppers. The impact has been particularly severe in the cattle industry because it is often not eligible for financial assistance from crop insurance programs. Consequently, the federal Government promptly announced on August 14 that \$48 million would be offered to cattle producers provided that the respective provincial Governments were prepared to participate on an equal cost-sharing basis.

Although most Manitoba farmers have benefited from substantially more rainfall than that enjoyed by their western neighbours, there are small but significant areas in the southwest where the volume of hay production is even lower than last year's. Consequently, the federal Government has allocated approximately \$1 million to assist those Manitoba cattle producers, most of whom reside in my own constituency. Unfortunately, the NDP Government of Manitoba has so far failed to respond to that offer. As a result, cattle producers in my area are faced with the prospect of being denied what is rightfully theirs.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to implore my NDP colleagues in the House from the Province of Manitoba to add their voices to mine in order to persuade the Government of Manitoba to redress this wrong. That Government must not be allowed to play politics on the backs of Manitoba cattle producers.

FISHERIES

RELEASE OF CANNED TUNA PRODUCTS FOR SALE

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor-Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, many observers have expressed concern about the blissful ignorance of science among politicians in this technological age. As a scientist, I could not have imagined a more deliberately intentional or dangerous demonstration of that ignorance than the action of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Fraser) in releasing one million cans of tainted tuna against the advice of a host of technical advisers. Perhaps the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) should just fire all of his regulatory scientists, close down the Food and Drug Directorate, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Department of Agriculture and, for good measure, the Science Council. For they all give scientific and not political advice. Think of the savings to the Canadian taxpayer if the Prime Minister just put that Star-Kist technician, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, in charge.

I wonder if there is anyone in the Government who understands that scientifically based food inspections are to protect people and must be independent, precisely because lawyerpoliticians judge by politics and not on the basis of scientific criteria or safety. Angry consumers in Ottawa Centre have provided cans of tuna for the Prime Minister's consumption.