

Oral Questions

[Translation]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

QUEBEC—CROP DAMAGE—MEASURES TO PROTECT CONSUMERS

Mr. Claude Wagner (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a supplementary question of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Since the climate will have an important influence on the price of fruits, vegetables, meat and milk how does the department intend to react to protect the consumer who is already overburdened by prohibitive costs?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, could I ask the hon. member to repeat his question?

Mr. Wagner: With pleasure, Mr. Speaker.

My question is as follows: In view of the marked influence which the climate exerts on the price of fruit, vegetables, meat and milk, what type of action does the department intend to take to protect the consumers already heavily burdened with extremely high costs?

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): They will hire another chairman at \$40,000 a year.

Mr. Gray: Mr. Speaker, I think this question is related to our economic policy as a whole and, in our budget speech of last February, we have already announced a number of measures aimed at helping consumers in this area.

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[English]

[Later:]

AGRICULTURE

NORTHEASTERN SASKATCHEWAN—INABILITY OF FARMERS TO FINISH SEEDING BECAUSE OF RAIN—POSSIBLE FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I have a related question for the Minister of Agriculture. It has to do with the very heavy rainfalls in the northeastern part of Saskatchewan. Many farmers are unable to complete their seeding as a result of flooding in that area. Has the minister been approached by the province of Saskatchewan and has his department given any consideration to providing some assistance to those farmers who will not be able to complete their planned seeding?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I have not been contacted by the province of Saskatchewan, but my officials have given me an up to date report. As of today, 87 per cent of the seeding in Saskatchewan has been completed. We understand there are some areas that have been flooded. I hope that these people have taken crop insurance, as I advised them to do, because the increase in crop insurance in Saskatchewan is over 100 per cent.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member on a supplementary question, and then the Leader of the Opposition.

[Mr. Whelan.]

Mr. Korchinski: May I ask the minister whether crop insurance will apply where the crop has not been planted in some areas?

Mr. Whelan: That is strictly up to the type of plan that the province may run. Some provinces have no-planting crop insurance. I am not sure whether Saskatchewan has that type of plan.

Mr. Korchinski: A further supplementary—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I believe there are four minutes left before the end of the question period. The hon. member has a second supplementary, after which I will recognize the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for South Shore.

Mr. Korchinski: Would the minister give the same consideration to those farmers as was given to farmers in Ontario and Quebec last year?

Mr. Whelan: We treat all farmers in Canada as Canadians.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

MONITORING OF SALES TAX AND TARIFF CUTS TO ENSURE BENEFITS REACH CONSUMERS—REQUEST FOR REPORT

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs who will, I am sure, recall how many times he has assured the House that he is going to give us the results of his monitoring of the reduction in prices following the tariff and tax changes announced by the Minister of Finance. Can the minister give the House a firm date when he will be making this report to the House, or are we to assume that there is no such monitoring and that a report will never be received by the House?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I cannot attempt to consider what information to provide until the work in question is completed. It has not yet been completed. Therefore I am unable to assist the hon. member by fixing a date now for the report as he has requested.

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● (1450)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

STEPS TO OBTAIN ACCEPTANCE OF PRINCIPLE THAT COASTAL STATES HAVE RIGHT TO MANAGE FISHING RESOURCES ON CONTINENTAL SHELF

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, may I address my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the fact that agreement has not been reached on an agenda for the Law of the Sea Conference at New York in December and this will cause a