

Oral Questions

GRAIN

ALLEGED INSTRUCTION BY WHEAT BOARD TO FARMERS NOT TO SEED GRAIN—REQUEST FOR EXPLANATION

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. On March 13 I asked the minister whether the Wheat Board would be taking on contracts after the strike, and whether it was advisable to seed grain this year in view of the huge backlog. The minister replied that it was advisable to seed grain. However, a report two days later which appeared in the *Financial Post* indicates that the Canadian Wheat Board has taken the unprecedented step of telling western farmers to cut back on planting because it cannot guarantee it can move the harvested grain. Would the minister care to explain the discrepancy between himself and the Wheat Board, which is in a position to really know?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, there is no discrepancy whatever between the Wheat Board and the statements I have made, but there certainly is in respect of the report. The report to which the hon. member referred is completely false and inaccurate. The chief commissioner of the Canadian Wheat Board called me shortly after the report came to his attention. He said there was no truth to it whatever and that the Canadian Wheat Board is fully in agreement that it is in the best interests of Canada at the present time for us to go for fairly full production next year.

Mr. Korchinski: Mr. Speaker, will the minister, then, guarantee that next year's crop will be taken by the board?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the usual letter to the producers has been sent which indicates to them the kind of guarantee of minimum quantities that will be taken by the board, and it is a good assurance of the sales they will want. In addition to that, of course, there is the point that many of the grain bins in the country will be empty and additional production, from the point of view of security of supply, is desirable.

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AIRPORTS

PICKERING—ALLEGED PROMISE OF MINISTER TO STOP CONSTRUCTION IF MAJORITY OF PEOPLE OPPOSED

Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. On February 21, in answer to my question regarding the Pickering airport project, the minister answered in part:

If the hon. gentleman can bring some kind of evidence to show that the majority of the population is against the airport, I am ready to revise the whole thing.

Could the minister confirm his statement by assuring the House that, if proof can be produced showing that a majority of the people of Toronto oppose the present project, he in fact will take appropriate steps to scrap all plans in regard to the new airport?

[Mr. Buchanan.]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I do not see what kind of answer the hon. member is looking for, because I have received no evidence that the population of Toronto does not want an airport.

Mr. Jelinek: I have a supplementary question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. With due respect, I must say that the hon. member is asking a hypothetical question. He is asking the minister what action he would take in the event of something happening.

Mr. Jelinek: I hesitate to rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, but it is well known that the minister has a reputation for changing his mind on many occasions, and I wonder whether he will reverse the stand he took in answer to my question of a couple of weeks ago.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, there are many places in Canada where there are people who never change their minds.

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IMMIGRATION

AVAILABILITY OF SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS TO ALIENS—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the present plans being made in respect of the green paper on immigration and my concern that immigrants who come to Canada and conform to the regulations be protected, since I have a very strong feeling that those aliens who misuse immigration bring to bear a certain reaction to immigrants who come in legally, I wonder whether the minister could indicate what steps are being taken by his department to make sure that social insurance cards are not being made available to those who are visitors or aliens of Canada who might be able to obtain employment when they are not entitled to that employment.

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, an examination is being made of the social insurance number and therefore the cards. I have to reiterate that it was never intended to be an identification measure or process, although at the same time I might say that de facto it is being used for that purpose and its inefficiency in that respect is causing a great deal of problems, but we are examining this and anticipate introducing some changes in that process before too long.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

INFLATION—REQUEST FOR EARLY STATEMENT ON OBJECTIVE ON SEEKING CONSENSUS AND PROGRESS THEREON

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister who