

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I do know the Treasury Board is constantly attempting to improve the efficiency and proficiency of government and inquiring into its administration and the administration of other departments. This study is one of such initiatives of the President of the Treasury Board. As far as details are concerned, I would ask the hon. member to hold his question and I will ask the minister to answer it the next time he is in the House.

**Mr. Alexander:** Following that answer—after all, the Prime Minister does not know everything that is going on in the country—I would put the matter to him this way. There is a study, and there has been some indication that the government is intending to impose red-circling on a massive scale. Would the Prime Minister, when he is discussing this matter with the President of the Treasury Board, also ask him if he would be prepared to see to it that that 1976 study is referred to the appropriate standing committee, perhaps miscellaneous estimates, in order that the whole matter can be looked into prior to any red-circling, given the fact that red-circling was never envisaged to be used in such a massive way as is indicated in today's press? Would the Prime Minister tell the House that he will be pleased to take this matter up with the President of the Treasury Board as well?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board is presently appearing before a Senate committee on some of his policies. The hon. member knows the President of the Treasury Board is available in the House almost every day to answer questions. Of course, he appears before committees of this House, notably on his estimates, where the hon. gentleman can not only put these questions but make some proposals of his own, about which he is always very generous.

**Mr. Alexander:** Mr. Speaker, why cannot the Prime Minister answer my question, or does he want to continue governing in secrecy? I am asking the Prime Minister whether he will see to it that this matter is brought to the attention of the President of the Treasury Board. After all, this matter has hit the fan over the past two or three days. Would he ask him whether he will see to it that the 1976 report is directed to the appropriate committee before further consideration is given to wholesale red-circling? That is all I am asking the Prime Minister.

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, that is all I am answering, and the hon. member does not have to wax indignant over it. I told him I would note his questions and transfer them to the attention of the hon. minister.

**An hon. Member:** And keep them under cover.

[Mr. Alexander.]

**SMALL BUSINESS**

## PROGRAMS TO ASSIST

**Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Small Business. In view of our continuing insistence that action dealing with small business problems in this country is long overdue, and because the minister has now had a full week to absorb the latest positive recommendations made during our opposition day last Tuesday, could the minister confirm to this House his intention to introduce much needed incentive-oriented programs to small business along those lines today or in the near future?

**Hon. A. C. Abbott (Minister of State (Small Business)):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated last week, notwithstanding the helpful intervention of the hon. member we have been planning for some time to initiate new programs of assistance for small business. I hope to be able to announce some of them very shortly.

**Mr. Jelinek:** Mr. Speaker, I am naturally pleased that the minister is finally succumbing to our initiatives and I look forward to his announcements. However, I wonder why small business rates so low with this government that it was virtually ignored in the recent budget and is now looked at as an afterthought.

Could the minister tell us whether we can look forward to hearing him on motions when he makes these announcements in this House, as is customary, or will he follow the recent examples of his cabinet colleagues and the Prime Minister and once again ignore parliament by making his statements outside the House? Which is it going to be? I hope it will be in the House.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

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**AGRICULTURE**

## PROBLEMS OF DAIRY INDUSTRY

**Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Since I have only one question, perhaps you will permit me a little longer preamble. The concern of the dairy farmers of Canada for the future of the dairy industry was heightened this past week by three events. The minister was defeated in a live milking contest by the hon. member for Elgin, the official opposition critic for agriculture.

In view of the obvious need to improve the skills of the minister and his department, some concerned constituents in Oxford have asked me to provide the minister with this new gadget for solving dairy problems. The directions read as follows:

This rather complex gadget  
Is one you pull and squeeze  
It's a Dairy-Problem-Solver—