

Inquiries of the Ministry
ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

FINANCE

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY CRISIS—EFFECT ON
CANADIAN DOLLAR

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance. Is the minister in a position to make a statement to the House giving in some detail the situation in the international money market, and also how he foresees that the Canadian dollar position will be protected by steps taken to date so that we do not suffer any splash, shall we say, from this international monetary crisis which is building up to very serious proportions?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would consider making such a statement when the position is somewhat clarified. I understand that the finance ministers of the European Economic Community are meeting in Brussels on Saturday and that the German cabinet has scheduled a cabinet meeting for Saturday afternoon. So far as the Canadian dollar is concerned, there has been very light trading in the Canadian dollar and its value has not been affected materially.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): The minister will appreciate, of course, that the Canadian dollar could be considerably affected if there is, shall we say, a movement away from certain currencies and the Canadian dollar becomes a currency of refuge for speculators. We must also consider the position of our exporters, and I think that is the position the minister must guard the most.

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AGRICULTURE

INTERPROVINCIAL MARKETING—QUEBEC LEGISLATION TO
ESTABLISH BORDER CONTROL STATIONS—GOV-
ERNMENT POLICY

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. Has the minister seen the legislation to establish border control stations which the government of Quebec is proposing, or has he been consulted in regard to the implications of this legislation with respect to trade in agricultural products?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): No, Sir, not yet.

Mr. Gleave: In view of the fact that Bill C-176, which the minister referred to yesterday, does not provide any protection against obstacles to interprovincial trade, will he now join the government of Manitoba and support its application to the Supreme Court of Canada so that we may have a decision from the highest court regarding the crucial problem of interprovincial trade in agricultural products?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It seems to me that the hon. member's supplementary is similar to a question which was asked yesterday or the day before.

[Mr. MacEachen.]

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister. What is the policy of the government toward this move to balkanize Canada which could be followed by other provinces and would result in the effective balkanization of the country?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I believe our policy has been announced to the House on this matter.

Mr. McGrath: In view of the concern felt in the country over these moves to restrict the free flow of trade between provinces, which could have very serious detrimental effects on some provinces, including my own, I think the House deserves a much better answer than the Prime Minister gave, which in fact was no answer at all.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary North on a supplementary.

Mr. Lewis: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, with great respect, a similar question was asked yesterday to the one asked by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar with regard to joining the government of Manitoba in its application to the Supreme Court of Canada. The answer was that Bill C-176 would do the job. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the question the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar asked took precise note of what the Minister of Justice said yesterday. He suggested to the minister that Bill C-176 does not have anything to do with it and asked him whether, in view of that, he would join the government of Manitoba in its application to the Supreme Court of Canada because the subject matter is of immense importance to the country.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary North.

INTERPROVINCIAL MARKETING—INSTRUCTIONS TO FED-
ERAL COUNSEL IN PROCEEDINGS BEFORE SUPREME
COURT

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): In light of the questions asked today and the answer given yesterday by the Minister of Justice and in view of the constitutional question of free trade and keeping this country together and unified, will the Minister of Justice now accept his responsibility, stand in his place and advise the House whether he has instructed counsel to represent the federal government, whom he has instructed, what province that counsel is from, and what are the instructions? This is not an ordinary case. It is a constitutional question.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the minister might reply to the supplementary just asked by the hon. member and the supplementary asked by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar.

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I did say yesterday in reply to questions put to me by the hon. member for Calgary North and the hon. member