

Business of the House

the province of Alberta has indicated its intention to request leave to appeal—would certainly have very widespread ramifications not only for this project but for others.

Consequently, representatives of the Departments of Transport, Fisheries and Oceans, Environment and Justice have been meeting and will continue to meet in order to study the judgment and its ramifications on this and other projects.

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, the ramifications of this decision were known to this government a long time ago when the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Environment and other ministers of the Crown subscribed to the notion of sustainable development at home and abroad. This is no excuse to give us in the House today.

My supplementary question is again for the Minister of Transport. He has received a request from an organization in Alberta called The Friends of the Oldman River. They are urging him to take action and to stop the construction of the dam.

• (1500)

Will the minister be a friend of this organization and inform the Alberta government that the work must be halted immediately? Or does he want to let the organization do the work for him?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary has answered the question. This is a decision with far-ranging implications. I think that the people of Canada—all those interested, such as the people of Alberta and environmentalists would want us to take every look at it that we can in order to come up with the best decision as to how to proceed. We have no difficulty with doing that and explaining to the people of Canada that we are taking that kind of a look at it.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

Premier Devine and the minister have been leading western Canada to believe that a cash program will be

forthcoming to assist producers in putting in the crop this spring. However, no program has yet been announced.

Tonight, the minister and the premier are meeting with bankers in Toronto to discuss the agricultural debt. How does this meeting affect the expected cash pay-out? When can western Canada expect this promised pay-out to materialize?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, we have received the report of the federal-provincial committee that has assessed the current situation. We are evaluating it and looking at various options that might be considered.

The meeting tonight with bankers and Premier Devine is to discuss some of the long-term farm credit problems that exist within the province of Saskatchewan and to look at some options there as well.

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, western Canada needs stability, not political gamesmanship. The agricultural industry is clearly in crisis. Prairie cities, towns and villages are in a desperate situation. The net-out migration from Saskatchewan alone is some—

Mr. Speaker: Given the time I would like the hon. member to put his question.

Mr. Laporte: My question, Mr. Speaker, is this. Given the fact that there has been a tremendous out-migration from western Canada, will the minister be telling Canadian banks today that they should be treating western Canada with the same compassion that they are treating Third World debtors with the restructuring program that is taking place there?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member and other hon. members of the House that we are working on this very serious problem at the present time.

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[Translation]

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WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, and now for the customary Thursday question: we would like to know what the government's order of