

Oral Questions

will report as soon as we have made a careful calculation of that very excellent proposal of Dr. Smith.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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AGRICULTURE

REPORTED REDUCTION IN DAIRY QUOTA

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. As the minister is aware, the national dairy policy ended on April 1 of this year and has not yet been renewed. An extensive interdepartmental review of Canada's dairy policy is under way, which has given rise to many serious concerns among dairy farmers. One report which has been gaining considerable momentum among dairy farmers is that their market share quota might be reduced by one-third. Can the minister say whether or not there is any truth to this particular statement? Will the minister state what the government's attitude is toward the future of Canada's national dairy policy, which is the best in the world according to one famous Canadian?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, as far as I am concerned there is not one bit of truth to what the hon. member says is being circulated. It is a bad rumour concerning our very healthy dairy industry. I cannot add any more to my reply at this time.

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LABOUR RELATIONS

DE HAVILLAND AIRCRAFT OF CANADA, LIMITED—POLICY RESPECTING FEMALE EMPLOYEES

Mr. John Bosley (Don Valley West): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the minister responsible for de Havilland Aircraft of Canada, Limited, I address my question to the Minister of Labour. It is with regard to that corporation's practices. The chairman of local 673 of the United Auto Workers at de Havilland Aircraft last week charged very seriously that de Havilland is ghettoizing its female workers by refusing to allow them to apply for work on the factory floor with the effect that one-tenth of 1 per cent of the female workers at de Havilland work on the floor, at the same time requiring factory experience if a promotion is to be granted. Given that de Havilland is a federally-owned corporation, could the Minister of Labour assure me that he will be taking action immediately to correct this very unhappy practice of a corporation which should be setting an example in the Canadian workplace?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, the hon. member will realize that the charge has been made by one party to a collective agreement and is not the basis upon which action of the type he suggests can be taken. If, indeed,

there has been any discrimination against women workers in the assignment of work or in relation to their application to work on the floor, the remedies under the Canada Labour Code are quite clear, action can be taken and a proper adjudication made on whether or not there has been such discrimination. I suggest to the hon. member that that is the appropriate action in such a circumstance.

Mr. Bosley: Madam Speaker, the minister appears to be suggesting that in a company which the government owns workers should have to rely upon the law and not upon the owner of the company—their government.

Will the minister undertake to investigate this matter, given the seriousness of this allegation, given that it is a federally-owned company, and given that I presume the minister believes that companies we collectively own should set an example? If the allegations prove correct, will he advise de Havilland to correct their practices by setting an example, rather than making those people go to court?

Mr. Regan: Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. member as the labour critic for his party would be fully aware that Labour Canada can only continue to fulfil its role, either to government-owned corporations or privately-owned corporations, in the same way; that is, by remaining an independent party between the two. Obviously, in that sense the remedy for any such breach is clearly provided. If the hon. member wants to make a representation as to what management should do, then I am sure he is cognizant of the fact that I am not the minister responsible for the operations of the company. He should make those representations elsewhere.

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● (1500)

NATIONAL UNITY

WESTERN SEPARATISM—ATTITUDE OF PRIME MINISTER

Hon. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton North): Madam Speaker, I wish to thank you for recognizing me; it is very kind. My question is to the Right Hon. Prime Minister, if I may have his attention.

Mr. Trudeau: I am talking to Gene.

Mr. Paproski: The Prime Minister can either answer from where he is or from his seat, it does not really matter. He can talk to Whelan later.

Mr. Trudeau: I have to choose between two big guys.

Mr. Paproski: Over the past couple of weeks I have wanted to direct a couple of supplementaries to the right hon. gentleman. My question has to do with the Prime Minister taking shots at Quebec and Alberta. Since the separatist campaign is gathering pace, fuelled by the fear that Ottawa will in time turn the screws even tighter and change the face of the west, its economy and its politics, is the Prime Minister playing