

offender. We used to sell almost 3 million tonnes to them. In the last year we sold them a little over one million tonnes. Our main concern is what is going on between the European Community and the Americans, not solely with how the Americans are behaving.

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● (1440)

### LABOUR RELATIONS

#### REFUELING CONTRACT FOR AIR CANADA—REDUCTION IN COMPANY'S WAGE BENEFIT PACKAGE

**Mr. Guy Ricard (Laval):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. Recently in Montreal, Consolidated Aviation Fueling and Services had to reduce by 67 per cent its wage benefit package to be able to submit a competitive bid to Air Canada for refueling at Dorval and Mirabel Airports. Is the Minister aware of that and, if so, is he intending to find a solution to that important problem?

**Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I recognize the Hon. Member's concern. The practice to which he refers is the practice of tendering carried on by all Departments of Government in order to secure the best cost effective package they can. In some cases retendering of existing contracts have caused those companies to have to bring in a lower bid. It is open to all. There is nothing which is not ongoing about the tendering process. I am aware of it. It is a practice to provide the Canadian taxpayers with a good and economic use of their dollars.

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### TRADE

#### SUBSIDIZED UNITED STATES FLOUR SALE TO YEMEN

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board. Last Friday I told the House about the Americans selling wheat to Algeria with a massive subsidy. I now have a list of several more countries which are taking advantage of these American subsidies. Is the Minister aware that in January or February, just a few months ago, the Americans sold flour to Yemen for \$168 per ton, with a subsidy of \$123 per ton? If he is aware of that, can he tell us how our farmers can possibly compete? Is the Government now ready to come forth with a deficiency payment so farmers in western Canada can stay on the land?

**Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)):** Mr. Speaker, we are aware of those kinds of subsidies. The Hon. Member should also know that, because of the kind of reputation Canada has and the good standing of the Canadian Wheat Board, we were able to sign last year the first

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long-term agreement ever with Egypt. The Hon. Member should also know that as of the middle of last month, mid-March, the European Community was subsidizing barley to the tune of \$151 Canadian per ton and subsidizing wheat to the tune of \$131 Canadian per ton. So there are massive subsidies as far as the Europeans are concerned.

If the Hon. Member wants to know who is subsidizing the most, to my mind, again it is the Europeans who are the main culprits.

**Mr. Nystrom:** Well, we have our two bad boys then.

#### REQUEST THAT MINISTER ANNOUNCE DEFICIENCY PAYMENT FOR WESTERN FARMERS

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville):** Is the Minister aware that the list I have contains subsidies to countries like Egypt, Turkey, the Philippines, Zaire, Iraq and Morocco, in addition to Algeria and Yemen? If the Minister is aware of that will he now agree that the time has come to provide the farmers of western Canada with a deficiency payment? Will the Minister answer that specific question?

**Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)):** Mr. Speaker, we have the same list. I keep up to date on a daily basis with what is going on. We also keep up to date in terms of letting the Americans know our concerns. The Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Prime Minister are also raising those issues. We are doing what we think is appropriate in the circumstances but doing it in such a way that we can continue to have discussions not only with the Americans but with the Europeans. With regard to a deficiency payment, I have said before that we think our record in terms of addressing agricultural concerns is substantial, and within the limits of the fiscal situation, as the Prime Minister said, we would like to do more.

#### THREAT POSED BY UNITED STATES ACTIONS

**Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The Minister will recall that a year and a half ago the Prime Minister said to Canadians that: "You can bet your bottom dollar that when American protectionist pressures are brought to bear on the world, Canada will not be targeted". Given the Minister's statement a few moments ago that Canada is facing a very serious threat from the United States, would the Minister tell us if the Prime Minister was living in cuckoo land last year when he made that statement? Or has the Minister bungled the negotiations so badly that we have gone from no threat to a very serious threat in the course of 12 months?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is quoting the Prime Minister out of context and he knows it.

**Mr. Tobin:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister's fatuous and flippant manner of dealing with a serious question is—