

Oral Questions

sent a letter to the DeMings asking them to transfer their farm voluntarily to the Royal Bank to avoid messy foreclosure proceedings. That did not work, the DeMings stayed. So this month the Royal Bank has foreclosed on the DeMings family.

Will the Prime Minister have his officials talk to officials at the Royal Bank and consider some of the many options the people in that area have suggested in order to keep those farmers in their homes?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I shall certainly take note of the specific case mentioned by the Hon. Member and bring it to the attention of the Inspector General of Banks, who, I am sure, will want to pursue the matter with the bank in question. However, I may remind the Hon. Member that the Royal Bank has announced a program aimed at allowing farmers to remain on their farms even if they are unable to meet their payments. Furthermore, I would like to point out to the Hon. Member that spokesmen for the Canadian Federation of Agriculture have stated that the measure taken by the Royal Bank is a positive one in the present economic situation.

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[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF DELEGATION FROM THE INUIT
TAPIRISAT OF CANADA

Madam Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of the House to the presence in our gallery of a delegation from the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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TRANSPORT

TRUCKING FIRMS' APPLICATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE

Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Last summer the trucking industry was led to believe, as a result of the Maislin bail-out, that other trucking firms could apply for special assistance and receive that special assistance from the federal Government. Have any requests been granted? When will the Minister's office deal with the large number of requests from the trucking industry that we understand are in his office, and so end the uncertainty within the industry respecting further loans and assistance?

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member asked a similar question yesterday.

Mr. Lewis: No, I didn't.

Mr. Lumley: My predecessor, after he announced assistance to the Maislin Corporation, indicated that we would take a very serious look at expanding the guidelines to include other industries in the service sector. While officials were looking at these possible changes, the Department was inundated with applications from the manufacturing and processing sector. As funds were limited at that time we made the decision not to proceed with service sector applications. Consequently, we are not looking at other applications of a similar nature.

An Hon. Member: This is really unreal.

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, I did not ask any questions yesterday about criteria. Yesterday, the Minister made accounting history with his terminology of shareholders assistance.

MAISLIN INDUSTRIES—DELAY IN APPOINTMENT OF
GOVERNMENT-NOMINATED DIRECTOR

Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North): Madam Speaker, I have a further question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Yesterday he told the House the only condition of the loan agreement with Maislin that had not been met was for the federal Government to appoint a director, a watchdog for taxpayers. Can the Minister explain to the House why, in view of the \$34 million exposure Canadian taxpayers have, it has taken the Government over seven months to appoint this particular individual? Will it perhaps be a short-term appointment?

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, as the Hon. Member knows, being a chartered accountant, when a director sits on a board, that director under the Corporations Act is responsible to the shareholders of the company, of which we are only one, through Government guarantees. We have made attempts to find somebody knowledgeable in the transportation sector who obviously would have no potential conflict, and to this point in time we have not been able to find a suitable candidate.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

QUERY RESPECTING NUMBER OF TRUCKING FIRMS RECEIVING
ASSISTANCE

Hon. Bill Jarvis (Perth): Madam Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce? Are we to assume, therefore, that the only Canadian trucking company to be the beneficiary of government largesse is Maislin? Despite the fact that many other trucking companies, based on the suggestion by the minister's predecessor, have applied and would qualify under a particular program and its guidelines, are we now to assume that the only trucking company in Canada to benefit under this bail-out will be Maislin Trucking?

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): What a beautiful friendship.