

Oral Questions

of this to all Canadians, in Ontario, across the country, in Quebec and elsewhere.

• (1440)

We have made the case very vigorously and very strongly. I have made it personally time and time again. I look forward to meeting with the producers. I look forward to meeting with other European and world leaders precisely on this point, to hammer home again the vital importance of this to our producers and our producers to us as a country.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

Since the Dunkel report has come out, Canadian dairy and poultry producers are extremely concerned that they are going to lose this vital industry that provides nearly 100,000 jobs.

I am asking the Prime Minister if between now and the end of this month he would be willing to meet with President Bush and President Delors again to seek their support so that this vital industry, employing nearly 100,000 people, can be maintained and that the Canadian dairy farms and poultry farms may be maintained as well. Is the Prime Minister willing to meet with them?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to meet with whomever and to go anywhere to advance the cause of these agricultural producers.

I spoke to President Bush on Saturday in regard to this and to other matters. I have constant meetings and ongoing conversations in following up initiatives taken up by the Minister of State for Agriculture.

I expect to be meeting soon with agricultural producers in this area, pursuant to which we will no doubt have other meetings to advance the cause of our dossier in the international GATT negotiations.

I have met with everybody from Art Dunkel to President Bush, to President Mitterrand and to the president of the European commission. We had a meeting with Jacques Delors that lasted in excess of three hours precisely on this point. We made the case, chapter and verse, about its importance not only to the nation but to each individual producer. We are going to make it again.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

As the minister is aware, the Conference of Women in Trades, Technology and Operations is winding up today in Ottawa. Its proposal to create a national data bank allowing women in non-traditional occupations to network with employers has been on the minister's desk for over a year now.

Will the minister agree to meet with representatives of this organization today to explain why his government is backing away from its commitment?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, on my way to the House today I received the representation of the national co-ordinator.

As the member knows, we are reviewing the request for funds from the women in trades and technology group. No decision has yet been taken on the request, but I should be able to render a decision soon.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

If the minister is truly committed to employment equity with regard to women, and if his government is truly committed to putting some of the 1.5 million unemployed Canadians back to work, can he explain why this worth-while proposal has been sitting on his desk for over a year?

If he is truly committed to employment equity, I ask him: Will he meet with representatives of the organization today and follow through on his commitment to fund this worth-while project?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, it seems necessary to have the member acknowledge that there are 900,000 more women working today in Canada than there were in September 1984. That is quite an accomplishment.

The hon. member is discussing one particular case, a group seeking funds. I have indicated that we are reviewing the request for funds and I should be able to make a decision soon.