

TRADE

SUGGESTED SALE OF SWORDFISH TO OTHER COUNTRIES

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In view of the serious financial difficulties presently being experienced by the swordfish fishermen in Atlantic Canada as a result of the mercury scare, has the minister made any inquiries of European countries or Japan in an effort to sell swordfish to those countries, since they are still catching them?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): I will take this question as notice, Mr. Speaker. May I deal with a question asked previously, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I realize the minister has tried to catch the Speaker's eye, and this may be the time to recognize the minister. However, I should like to bring to the attention of hon. members that there are only five minutes remaining. I shall allow the minister to answer a previous question, but I hope the reply will be short and that subsequent questions will also be short.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

USE OF NET SOCIAL BENEFIT RATHER THAN GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT AS INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, in reply to a question asked on Tuesday by the skeptical member for Edmonton West I wish to inform him that Statistics Canada—the Dominion Bureau of Statistics—is as I assumed, looking into that matter. There is widespread interest among statisticians, I am informed, in the possibility of developing a set of “social accounts” which might provide in a different sphere the sort of logical structure—obviously, I did not write this—which the “national accounts” and “gross national product” have provided for many years.

The topic is under study by the statistical agencies of the OECD and the United Nations, and the Dominion Bureau of Statistics is participating actively in this work. Thus far the project has been exploratory. At the moment, a senior officer of DBS is at meetings in Europe on the matter.

So, obviously NSB was something quite well known among enlightened people.

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GRAIN

RAPESEED—REPRESENTATIONS FROM JAPANESE IMPORTERS RESPECTING POSSIBLE INCLUSION UNDER WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. Has the minister or his department received any communications directly from Japanese importers on the possible inclusion of rapeseed under the Canadian Wheat Board Act and, if so, would he say what the tenor of the communications was?

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I have received a number of wires from sources, including sources in Japan, on this subject but also broadly related to the question of the rapeseed market. In some cases it was not easy to tell whether their concern was about the suggested closing of the Vancouver futures market which had been contemplated by the Winnipeg Grain Exchange or some other steps being taken or whether it was the result of the erroneous report about the bill which was given initially. I have also received telegrams from them two months ago on the general subject of the problems they were having with the rapeseed market, following which there was action on our part in conjunction with the rapeseed association and the Winnipeg Grain Exchange to correct the situation.

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FINANCE

INCLUSION IN BUDGET OF INCENTIVE TO INCREASE SALE OF DURABLE GOODS

Mr. S. Perry Ryan (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. In light of a recent survey which indicates that buying intentions for durable consumer goods have not improved since last fall, will the government consider an incentive in this area in next month's budget?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not know the survey of which my hon. friend speaks. I do know there are indications that consumer spending is increasing in Canada.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my question is—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Spadina on a supplementary, but we are running short of time. I bring this to the attention of hon. members.

Mr. Ryan: Mr. Speaker, has the minister not been advised of a five-month study of 25 major durable categories which shows March intentions at the same level as November last?

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AGRICULTURE

POTATOES—ASSISTANCE TO PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND GROWERS

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the very depressed condition of agriculture in Prince Edward Island and the recent submission by the provincial Minister of Agriculture, is he prepared to indicate what forms of assistance will be forthcoming, particularly to the potato growers as they face the heavy expenses of buying fertilizer and seed?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, we had a very useful meeting with the Ministers of