

Oral Questions

excuses. No doubt, very real problems have arisen. On the other hand, I say to the right hon. gentleman that I know he has difficulty in appreciating that we have already moved so much grain this year that we have almost exceeded the amount moved at any time during his administration.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: The farmers will not be misled by that eye-wash.

PROVISION OF BOXCARS TO TRANSPORT WHEAT—
COMMITMENT BY RAILWAYS TO MEET TARGETS

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): In view of the fact that officials of the Wheat Board are concerned that they will not be able to meet the export targets they now have before them, and since many elevator delivery points in western Canada are congested, has the minister held a meeting with officials of the CNR and the CPR and is he able to tell the House that he has received any commitment from the railroads to meet the targets to which they have agreed with respect to Vancouver and Thunder Bay?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): We have held such meetings. I am not yet satisfied with the commitments I have received.

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AGRICULTURE

PLANS TO COPE WITH FARMERS' INCREASING INPUT COSTS

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture following the first series of questions asked today. Since the farm input price index for Canadian agriculture has increased over the fourth quarter of 1972 by some 20 per cent for the country as a whole—24 per cent in eastern Canada and 14.9 per cent in western Canada—will the minister tell us what specific plans the government has prepared to cope with the ever-rising input costs which farmers are experiencing?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): The measures were outlined in the Speech from the Throne yesterday.

Mr. Murta: The minister tells us they were outlined in the Speech from the Throne yesterday. I would ask him to refer specifically to that part of the speech in which those measures were outlined so that the Canadian people might be better informed.

Mr. Whelan: I have been preparing the ground for some 15 months. We planted the seed yesterday and I hope that before the crop comes through the ground—

An hon. Member: What about fertilizer?

Mr. Whelan: —I shall be explaining this in greater detail when I speak in the House later.

[Mr. Lang.]

TRADE

STATUS OF CUBAN ORDER FOR LOCOMOTIVES PLACED WITH MONTREAL FIRM—INQUIRY AS TO ORDER FOR AUTOMOBILES

Mr. Ed Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Is the minister aware that the government of Cuba has placed an order for 25 locomotives with a Montreal firm? If so, can he inform the House whether the sale is to be proceeded with and, if not, why not?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): I am aware that the Cuban government is interested in placing such an order. I am also aware that the company's American directors are encountering some difficulties. Representations have been made to the United States government to which we have not yet received a formal reply.

Mr. Broadbent: My supplementary arises from a related matter, namely, that the government of Cuba has changed its policy concerning the importation of North American-produced automobiles of the type once made only in Canada and the United States but now also manufactured in South America, and has recently placed orders in Argentina for automobiles produced by General Motors, Ford and Chrysler. Can the minister tell the House whether such an original order was placed in Canada and, if so, were his officials involved in the negotiations surrounding such an order? If the answer is yes, can the hon. gentleman tell the House what position the government took?

Mr. Gillespie: I have already stated we are aware of the interest of the Cuban government in making a purchase of Canadian-manufactured locomotives.

Mr. Broadbent: Automobiles.

Mr. Gillespie: I am unaware of any interest on the part of the Cuban government in placing an order for Canadian-made automobiles.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

TYPE OF REVIEW OF OPERATIONS OF COMMISSION

Mr. Frank Ellis (Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration responsible for the Unemployment Insurance Commission. I would not want him to be unhappy because I did not put a question to him on the first day.

An hon. Member: Big deal!

Mr. Ellis: In light of the minister's statement in Quebec that there would be an inquiry into the Unemployment Insurance Commission and the reference in the Speech from the Throne to a comprehensive review of the Unemployment Insurance Commission, would the minister now indicate the extent and type of the inquiry and the timing?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): As the throne speech indicated, amend-