

SUPPLY AND SERVICES

ALLEGED REJECTION OF TENDER BY MR. BURTON OF IRMA,
ALBERTA

Mr. Arnold Malone (Battle River): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Supply and Services. To what extent does the Department of Supply and Services accept requests for tender by telephone and to what degree does the department imply that a tendered bid has been accepted and then some weeks later, after expenses have been encountered, host a meeting to reject the tender as in the case of Mr. R. E. Burton of Irma, Alberta.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That kind of detailed information should possibly be sought in another way. The hon. member may want to amplify his question now.

Mr. Malone: Mr. Speaker, I gave the minister notice by letter. Perhaps with that notice he can respond to it.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, I find it difficult to answer such a general question. Moreover, the hon. member provided me with the details of a specific problem, so I immediately asked my officials to make a report and I hope to have it by tomorrow to give the hon. member an answer.

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[English]

GRAIN

WHEAT—POSSIBILITY OF INCREASE IN DOMESTIC PRICE

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. Statistics Canada reported a large drop in farm income from \$1.7 billion to \$1.2 billion as compared with a year ago. A large portion of this is income received by grain farmers where a drop in total income of between 40 and 50 per cent was reported. Can the minister indicate whether it is his intention to take whatever steps are necessary to increase the price paid for wheat for domestic consumption?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the question of a review of that price is contained in the legislation. Currently, we are having discussions with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and some other farm organizations in relation to appropriate procedures to be used in examining that issue. It is a fact that the drop in grain income is from levels which were indeed very high. At this time we are still seeing the income effects of a price for wheat which was close to \$4 for the top grade, and really very high prices for barley, which were still really the impact of last year's \$4.50 price for durum. The fact that these are drops from previous levels does not remove the fact that they were still quite attractive levels. The problems of further drops in farm income raises the problem in a very real way.

Oral Questions
AGRICULTUREMEASURES TO IMPROVE FARM INCOME—GOVERNMENT
POSITION

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Since the minister responsible for the wheat board does not feel there is a serious problem in so far as the grain producers are concerned, I will direct my supplementary to the Prime Minister. Last Thursday the Minister of Agriculture suggested that many farmers are taking vacations and that their bank accounts are bulging. Everyone knows that an increase in the farm economy results in a boom in the total Canadian economy as farmers are great spenders. This also helps to relieve some of the unemployment problem. Can the Prime Minister indicate here and now whether he intends to have his government move in the direction of improving the farm economy so that the general unemployment picture will improve?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member's question will find its answer in the remarks just made a moment ago by the Minister of Transport responsible for grains, and the fact that we have introduced in this House the grain stabilization plan which has indeed been of great benefit to the farmers.

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PENITENTIARIES

PROPOSED MAXIMUM SECURITY INSTITUTION AT SELKIRK—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Dean Whiteway (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Solicitor General. It has to do with the new maximum security penitentiary planned for Manitoba. I understand that both the minister's department and the province of Manitoba favour the town of Selkirk as the site. Can the minister assure the House that pending the outcome of the internal discussions by the townspeople of Selkirk, either by referendum, plebiscite or other means, if the decision of the people of Selkirk is that they do not want this maximum security penitentiary it will not be placed in the town of Selkirk?

● (1440)

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): I should like to advise the hon. member that no firm decision has been taken as to the location of the penitentiary to which he refers. A number of sites are presently being considered and one of them is that of Selkirk, which, I understand, is favoured by the provincial government. However, it is the policy of the department not to go to areas where the people do not wish a penitentiary to be established and where that will is expressed very clearly.