

faced with the prospect of eating contaminated hamburger. Will he give the House some assurance that an effort is being made to muster all the inspection capabilities he has, to send inspectors into the province of Quebec and discharge his own responsibilities and lay charges where they are warranted?

[Translation]

**Mr. Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, surely the hon. member's suggestion does not deserve to be retained for the simple reason that, as I mentioned before, it is because of the work carried out by my inspectors in the province of Quebec and the current investigation that results have been obtained. The time to send investigators into the field has been long gone: the job was done over the past two years with the co-operation of the police force concerned and some of my departmental inspectors.

[English]

REASON FOR FAILURE TO PROSECUTE QUEBEC MERCHANTS  
SELLING MEAT UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

**Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** A final supplementary. If the minister now tells the House that the present revelations are as a result of the work done by his department perhaps he can explain to the House why he has not laid charges himself under the Food and Drugs Act.

[Translation]

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, this is probably the third time the hon. member has asked this question. The reply is quite clear and simple: before instituting proceedings, we must collect the necessary evidence if we do not want to see our petition get thrown out of court. This is exactly what we have been doing for the past few months and the case is before the board of inquiry. I have personally contacted the chairman of this board. He fully agrees that we should let the investigation continue so as to bring out all the facts, before instituting legal procedures, which might otherwise cause prejudice to the current investigation.

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[English]

#### FINANCE

DEFICIT IN BALANCE OF PAYMENTS ON TIRES FROM UNITED  
STATES—GOVERNMENT ACTION

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance along the lines of questions I put to him yesterday about the layoffs at the Firestone Rubber plant in Whitby and whether this could be attributed to the reduction in tariffs by the Canadian government. I should like to ask the minister now if he is aware that the deficit from the balance of trade for the sale and purchase of tires in the United States which has been running in the neighbourhood of \$25 million a year last year jumped to \$155 million and for the first two months of this year was \$24 million. In other words, if the trend continues we will have a deficit in the balance of payments of more than \$150 million. What inquiries are being made and what does the

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minister and his colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce propose to do about this very serious situation?

**Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the hon. member's questions yesterday I asked that the facts be brought to me. Because of the additional aspects brought forward by the hon. member this morning I will have further consultations with the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

**Mr. Orlikow:** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, and in view of the fact that the lay-off of almost 300 people at Whitby is not the only lay-off in the industry as there will be more in other cities in Ontario resulting in close to 2,000 people being laid off, will the minister discuss this matter with his colleague if he has not already done so? Also, what discussions are being held, if any, with representatives of the rubber industry about the problems of our worsening trade with the United States in tires and tubes?

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I understand there have been discussions with the industry but I should like to bring the whole matter up to date and get in touch with the hon. member.

● (1120)

REQUEST FOR MEASURES TO ASSURE CANADA'S SHARE OF  
NORTH AMERICAN TIRE MARKET

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Would the minister discuss with his colleague, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, the necessity, let alone the desirability, of meeting with representatives of the industry to attempt to get some assurance from them that new investment in Canada over the next few years will be at least proportional to our share of purchasing on the North American market because, as I have indicated, in recent years there has been a very sharp decrease in our share and a worsening in the situation of the whole industry and of workers?

**Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance):** On that aspect as well, my recollection is that certain representatives of the unions concerned have been in touch with our people.

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[Translation]

#### CONSUMER AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR INQUIRY ON QUALITY OF IMPORTED BUTTER

**Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

The minister says that he has held an inquiry regarding the meat market and it is still going on. Has the minister considered setting up an inquiry regarding the processing and packing of imported butter to protect the consumer against the sale of adulterated butter, to know if the consumer eats really pure butter at 50 per cent or 100 per cent?