

METRIC CONVERSION

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS IN MEETING COSTS OF CONVERSION

Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce responsible to the Metric Commission. In light of the fact that the government has recently indicated that a subsidy will be made available to assist motor mechanics in changing over to metric tools, will the minister give consideration to broadening this assistance program to help farmers and other individuals who will also be forced to change over as a result of metrication?

Hon. Len Marchand (Minister of State (Small Business)): Mr. Speaker, the Metric Commission and the sector committees have considered this question very carefully and have decided there are only two areas where subsidies would be needed. These were especially high cost areas. One is self-employed mechanics who have to buy their own tools and the other one is the retail scales conversion. We have no plans at present to increase the number of people who will require subsidy.

Mr. Scott: A supplementary question. Will the minister give consideration to the farmers and all those people involved with their own maintenance in this industry? Some of them will have to buy tools as expensive as those for the motor mechanic but the legislation ignores them.

Mr. Marchand: Mr. Speaker, I will look into that.

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

POSSIBILITY OF PROHIBITING USE OF ASBESTOS FIBRES IN PREPARATION OF FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Hon. Stanley Haidasz (Parkdale): Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In view of a recent consumers' report concerning the extensive use and health hazards of asbestos fibres in the preparation of food, beverage and pharmaceutical products in Canada are any steps being taken to prohibit its use?

Hon. A. C. Abbott (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think this question should be more appropriately directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

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[Translation]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

POSSIBILITY OF QUEBEC BEING INDEMNIFIED FOR NOT USING FORCE

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, since the press reported on the meeting between the provincial justice

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ministers and their counterpart at the federal level, would the Solicitor General be in a position to advise whether any proposals have been made concerning the cost of the RCMP services in Quebec and whether representations by the Quebec spokesman were different from those of the former justice minister in the Bourassa administration?

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, indeed both Quebec and Ontario justice ministers presented some claims. At first sight, Mr. Speaker, and after listening to the Quebec Minister of Justice, the arguments made in support of his request this year were similar to the ones that have been considered and examined at the time his predecessor, Mr. Choquette, discussed the same issue with my predecessor the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): I want to ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. By his answer, does the minister mean to say that he categorically refuses to reconsider that problem or that he will take the time to consider those requests more closely to be in a position to inform the House definitely on that matter soon?

Mr. Fox: Mr. Speaker, the matter was examined closely a few years ago and in fact the Quebec and Ontario governments had seen fit to raise this matter at another level than that of the Solicitor General. They were supposed to do so at the meeting which took place last December between the Minister of Finance of Canada and the provincial ministers. Following their requests, the Minister of Finance gave a clear answer.

As regards the Department of the Solicitor General, Mr. Speaker, of course we are in a position to offer police services to the provinces and in return, they give money to us. However, we cannot give subsidies to the provinces.

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[English]

ENERGY

CONSERVATION—GRANTS FOR HOME INSULATION—REASON FOR DIFFERENTIATION IN TREATMENT OF PROVINCES

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to those put by my colleagues, the hon. member for St. John's East and the hon. member for St. John's West, to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Does the minister agree that under our federal constitution, such matters as building codes, direct sales taxes, the production of electricity and the manner in which it is sold and metered within a province, not to mention the question of speed limits on the highways, are matters solely and wholly within provincial jurisdiction? Will he also agree that property assessment, utility rate structures, landlord and tenant relationships are also within provincial jurisdiction? That being so, how can he justify the treatment of residents of eight provinces whereby they are singled out for special consideration and heavy taxation while the residents of the other two provinces