

Oral Questions

State for External Affairs. In view of representations made by the National Women's Council of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee in a recent letter to the Prime Minister concerning certain Ukrainian women imprisoned in the Soviet Union, and in view of the request of this council that the Canadian government make efforts to secure the release of these women, will the minister ascertain whether the announcement of amnesty, which came from Moscow over the weekend, included these particular persons? If not, will the minister pursue this matter on behalf of the Canadian people?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I will make the necessary inquiries and pursue the matter further.

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AGRICULTURE**SUGGESTION ALL MEAT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION BE INSPECTED BY FEDERAL DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Gus Mitges (Grey-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the fact that meat carcasses from diseased animals processed by Federal Packing Incorporated of Magog, Quebec and offered for sale to the general public as meat suitable for human consumption bore the provincial approved meat inspection stamp, would the minister confer with his cabinet colleagues to consider placing all meat inspection in Canada under the direct supervision of the federal health of animals branch of the Department of Agriculture to prevent any further such incidents from taking place?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, this service is available to any provincial government which wants it, but it is not forced upon it.

Mr. Mitges: I realize this service is available, but in my opinion perhaps some direct action should be taken by the federal Department of Agriculture. Would the minister consider taking such action to prevent any further such incidents taking place?

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, we think that the sale of this meat is a deplorable thing. I have had discussions with my colleague the Minister of National Health and Welfare, and we will have further discussions, but it should be realized that this matter comes under provincial jurisdiction and that the province has the right to supervise that inspection if it so desires.

EGGS—POSSIBILITY OF CONTROLLING IMPORTS FROM UNITED STATES

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture, who seems to be enjoying a low profile these days, how he is reacting to the request of the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency, which met in Ottawa last week, to have the border with the United States closed. Does he intend to meet this request, and if so, why?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, as soon as it can be shown that the egg producers of Canada have their supply-management program in proper order—and they claim they do have but we are checking the facts on that at the present time—then we will inform our counterparts in the United States that we have a proper supply-management program which will take care of our needs, so they can expect that we would be asking for some control on imports into Canada.

CANADIAN EGG MARKETING AGENCY—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ENFORCE QUOTAS

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): What steps is the minister taking to ensure that CEMA is operating within the quotas it has set out for its member agencies, how it enforces these quotas and if interprovincial trade in eggs is now free.

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): We are doing that very thing, checking the agreements to make sure they are fulfilled. These all have to be checked out to make sure that the proper procedure is being followed, because I am not going to become involved in anything which will not be a properly managed program for egg production and egg sales in Canada.

● (1430)

INQUIRY AS TO PROVINCIAL JURISDICTION OVER INSPECTION OF MEAT IN INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to that asked of the Minister of Agriculture by the hon. member for Grey-Simcoe. In view of the answer he gave, I should like to ask the minister who has responsibility for interprovincial trade if the provinces have jurisdiction over the stamping and inspection of meat travelling from one province to another?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, any meat that travels from one province to another is supposed to be federally inspected.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS**DATE OF DECISION ON PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO ACTIVITIES OF SEAFARERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION**

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. It is some time since the SIU matter was placed in the minister's lap, but I notice that he and the Minister of Justice have been having a discussion this afternoon. Has the minister made up his mind what he is going to do with respect to the requirement for a federal inquiry regarding the activities of the SIU?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I would advise the hon. member that I will be making a statement tomorrow with regard to this matter.