

Oral Questions

FINANCE

LOSS TO TRUCK DEALERS RESULTING FROM BUDGET—
GOVERNMENT POSITION ON REIMBURSEMENT OF TAX

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): My question is supplementary to the one put on Friday by the hon. member for Edmonton West to the Minister of Finance. In view of the fact that truck dealers across Canada will lose approximately \$20 million, amounting to \$19,000 per dealer, due to tax policy changes announced in the budget if there is not a total refund of the tax already collected on trucks that are not sold, and the fact that dealers in Red Deer, like many dealers across Canada, will lose up to \$25,000 each, will the minister guarantee to this House that all dealers will be reimbursed for tax paid?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have received many representations from members on all sides of the House about this particular item, and I intend to ask the government to provide relief from federal sales tax for tax paid inventories of trucks and other transportation equipment affected by the sales tax exemptions proposed in the November 18 budget speech. The relief, which would be provided by way of an order in council, would apply to inventories of new transportation equipment on which tax has been paid and which were being held for resale. This is a particular exemption because of the specialized nature of the equipment and because a good deal of equipment is custom built.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ROME FOOD CONFERENCE—EXTENT OF CANADA'S FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Mr. Bill Jarvis (Perth-Wilmot): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It concerns the Rome Food Conference and Canada's reallocation of \$50 million in CIDA funds as a commitment at that conference for assisting developing countries to raise their agricultural production limits. Subsequently, I thought the Secretary of State for External Affairs made it clear in the House that the purpose of this allocation of \$50 million was to assist the developing countries. However, on November 14 the minister replied to a question of the Leader of the Opposition and said that the \$50 million had been set aside to purchase about 250,000 tons of grain for emergency food relief. My question therefore is: are there two \$50 million commitments and, if not, is part or all of the one \$50 million commitment being diverted from development assistance to emergency food assistance?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the commitment made at the Rome conference was to reallocate \$50 million for the current year for purposes attached to the food conference itself. The package of programs is being put together at present and I hope to be able to advise shortly on the specific purposes for which that money is being diverted.

[Mr. Mackasey.]

Mr. Jarvis: With relation, then, to the minister's response on November 14 to the Leader of the Opposition regarding the \$50 million that could be used to buy almost 250,000 tons of additional grain, is that a separate allocation entirely from that committed at Rome by the Canadian delegation?

Mr. MacEachen: I would have to check that exchange with the Leader of the Opposition, but I think in referring to that particular sum I was relating it to what could be done at present and the amount of grain it could purchase if it were totally directed to grain. Probably it was with reference to the same sum of money.

* * *

INDIAN AFFAIRS

DEMONSTRATIONS ON PARLIAMENT HILL ON SEPTEMBER 30,
1974—REQUEST FOR INQUIRY INTO ALLEGED POLICE
BRUTALITY

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): My question is addressed to the Solicitor General. I understand that the Solicitor General last week received a brief from the Civil Liberties Association in the national capital region, supported by 16 other Civil Liberties Associations throughout the country and by the National Indian Brotherhood, the Native Council of Canada and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, concerning the incidents of violence which took place on Parliament Hill on Monday, September 30, 1974, and urging an independent inquiry. My question is whether in view of the detailed nature of the evidence presented and the request of these responsible organizations an independent inquiry will be held to determine whether, in fact, there was unnecessary violence on that occasion and, if so, who was responsible for it.

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, it is true that I met with the head of the Civil Liberties Association for Ottawa last Thursday, I believe, and he had certain people with him supporting his brief. He gave me this brief, which was rather thick, containing many affidavits and documents. Following the meeting I referred it to officials for study. The study is not yet completed. In the brief he raised many questions and I told him that I would answer his questions as soon as possible.

Mr. Brewin: Will the minister be good enough to advise the House, when he makes up his mind, what response he will give to this request?

Mr. Allmand: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

* * *

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

FEED GRAINS—INQUIRY WHETHER STOCKS SUFFICIENT

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture being absent, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Justice who is responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board.