

Oral Questions

INDUSTRY

INCREASED PRICES OF COPPER AND ZINC—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO CONTROL—POSSIBLE IMPOSITION OF EXPORT TAX

Mr. Max Saltsman (Waterloo-Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. It relates to the sharp increase in the prices of copper and zinc. There has been a 45 per cent increase in the prices of those two commodities over the last 11 months. In view of the serious effect the increase in the prices of these raw materials will have on the manufacturing industry, and since most of these increases are being reflected in the profits of the companies rather than arising from increased costs to them, can the minister say what action he intends to take to control the price of copper and zinc in Canada?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, my department has had a number of discussions with leaders of the producing companies in Canada to review the situation and ensure that there will be adequate supplies of copper and zinc for Canadian converters and manufacturers. I believe this to be the case. On the pricing point, I think it is perhaps worth reminding the hon. member that there is a double two-price system. The international markets are governed by the London Metal Exchange price which is significantly ahead of the North American price for copper. Canadian manufacturers are receiving their copper at the lower figure, the figure posted in Canada.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Members are seeking further supplementaries. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge on a last supplementary followed by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. Then the Chair will see the hon. member for Cape Breton-The Sydneys.

Mr. Saltsman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In spite of the minister's reassurance that there is a double two-price system in Canada, nevertheless the price has risen by 45 per cent in this country in less than a year. Can the minister say whether he intends to take the same commendable action in respect of copper and zinc as has been taken by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources with regard to oil and impose an export tax on copper in order to control the domestic price?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, there are no plans to impose a tax on copper exports.

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ENERGY

OIL—REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE OF SUPPLIES TO INDEPENDENT DEALERS IN EASTERN CANADA

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Will the minister take steps to ensure that independent suppliers of home heating fuels in eastern Canada are guaranteed suppliers for delivery to Canadian homes and that this is considered a

[Mr. Speaker.]

priority before exports are made from refineries located in eastern Canada?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the hon. lady that exports have been under control since June of last year, and it is precisely for the purpose of assuring these supplies that the measure was taken yesterday to enable price increases in the Ontario market.

Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Is the minister aware that there are independent operators in eastern Canada with empty storage tanks as a result of having been refused supplies by the majors, and will he undertake to see that this situation is corrected so that there will not be Canadian homes throughout the winter without adequate oil supplies?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. lady wants to mention specific examples I am prepared to follow them up, but I would point out to her again that it is precisely for the purpose of assuring supplies to Ontario that we are enabling increases to take place in Ontario.

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MANPOWER

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—STATUS OF PROJECT TO REPAIR HOUSES OF OFF-RESERVE INDIANS IN NOVA SCOTIA

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the desperate substandard conditions that exist in Indian off-reserve housing in Nova Scotia, and in view of a telegram that has been received from the chiefs of the 11 Indian bands of Nova Scotia in reference to a LIP application for housing repairs, can the minister advise if he is aware of such an application and whether it has been approved by the provincial co-ordinating committee and is now awaiting Ottawa approval? Would he do whatever is possible to have this project approved because it is a rather serious situation?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I presume that this is with reference to LIP funds accompanying winter works grants from the Ministry of Urban Affairs. I have had consultations as recently as this morning with representatives of non-status Indians who have the same problem that exists with regard to treaty Indians. We are trying to work out arrangements under the more limited ceilings on LIP grants and the diffusion of those through the constituency advisory groups. I would hope all members would bring whatever influence they can to bear on the constituency advisory groups to remind them of the need for a sympathetic attitude toward those applications which must fit into the total structure.

Mr. Muir: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his answer. It is welcome in view of the fact that this application is from a province and no particular constituency advisory group is handling it. I wonder whether he would take that into consideration.