

Oral Questions

the price of what the farmer has to buy in order to avoid further significant upward pressure on the cost of food?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, any new policy initiatives will be announced in the House in the usual way.

SUGGESTED INQUIRY INTO INCREASED FARM COSTS—
GOVERNMENT ACTION

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. The minister will perhaps recall that on May 29 he took under consideration a suggestion that he should set up a special investigation under the Inquiries Act into the rising production costs of farmers. I should like to ask the minister whether he has now fully considered this suggestion and whether the inquiry has been initiated or will be initiated shortly?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, my consultations with my colleagues on this have not been completed.

SUGGESTED IMPOSITION OF PRICE CONTROLS—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary, to the Minister of Finance. In view of the difficulties that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs seems to be having in making a decision, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. In view of the upward pressure on farm costs and the fact that about 40 per cent, I think, of our economy is involved in supplying farmers one way or other, is the government now reviewing its approach of examining the food industry separately in terms of prices, and is the government now considering a comprehensive attack by means of a freeze and a medium term control policy as the only realistic and fair way to attack escalating food prices?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, with respect to food prices, the government is still of the opinion that the problem is the imbalance between demand and supply and that the suggestion offered by the hon. gentleman would not be effective.

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AGRICULTURE

EFFECT OF LICENSING OF RAPESEED EXPORTS ON FARM
COSTS—REQUEST FOR REMOVAL

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question in respect of the cost of food and the farmers' returns addressed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce or whoever is speaking for him this afternoon. There are ample stocks of rapeseed on hand for export at the present time, as a matter of fact there are some 22.8 million bushels in stock in elevators. Will the minister remove all restrictions on the export of rapeseed, including requirements for licences for export, so that

[Mr. Stanfield.]

farmers may hope to keep up with increasing costs of production.

Mr. Herb Breau (Parliament Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice. The minister should be here in a moment.

Mr. Gleave: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There are obviously a number of supplementaries to be asked on this subject. Perhaps I should recognize the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar on a supplementary, then the hon. member for Lisgar, and then we will move to the next subject, when I will call on the hon. member for York South. For the moment, I will recognize the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar on a supplementary.

Mr. Gleave: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the responsible minister is not in the House to answer these questions. I am quite prepared to hold them until such time as he is here. With your concurrence, Sir, perhaps I might be given this privilege.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will be recognized, if circumstances permit, later on. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Lisgar on this question, and then the hon. member for York South.

REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE OF ADEQUACY OF SUPPLY OF
FEED FOR LIVESTOCK IN VIEW OF EXPORT LICENSING BY
CANADA AND UNITED STATES

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, my question is in the same vein and is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce or to the Prime Minister.

An hon. Member: The minister is here now.

Mr. Murta: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, in that case, if he can tell the House whether he is satisfied that the new export licence arrangements of the United States and Canada, designed to assure minimum required levels of feed for livestock and poultry for the next few months, will be adequate to meet our present demands for that period of time.

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, this is a fairly complicated question on a very important subject. I will try to answer as briefly as I can. As far as a general comment is concerned, I cannot say that we have all the answers yet. Both the Department of Agriculture and my own department have been in active consultation with authorities in the trade in Canada and with United States officials. We expect to get further information. In the meantime we have been able to take the following decision: The Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce will accept export permit applications for those commodities placed under control on June 29, provided that these are supported by copies of the contracts in existence on that date for shipments up to October 15. Exporters are being requested to forward such applications and supporting documentation