

Oral Questions

REQUEST FOR STUDY OF COMMITTEE EVIDENCE TO
DETERMINE IF MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE COMMITTED
OFFENCE UNDER CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Justice. Will he examine the evidence presented yesterday to the special committee on egg marketing, to determine whether his colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, has committed an offence under section 115 of the Criminal Code dealing with disobeying a federal statute.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I am always glad to look at the reports of that interesting committee.

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NORTHERN AFFAIRS

ALLEGED ACTION BY CANADIAN TUNGSTEN COMPANY
AGAINST EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN LABOUR DISPUTE

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Minister of Labour, may I direct my question to the government House leader. It concerns a report to the effect that in the community of Can-Tung, in the southern part of the Northwest Territories, which is a company town run by Canadian Tungsten Company, provisions have been cut off for those in the community who were involved in a labour dispute and evictions have taken place. Will the minister assure the House that the department which licences these companies and permits them to operate in the Northwest Territories will require of them elementary standards of decency and humanity in the operation of these communities.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I will see that this question is brought to the attention of the minister.

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[Translation]

SOCIAL SECURITY

GRANTING OF OLD AGE PENSION TO SPOUSE AT AGE 60—
POSSIBLE RETROACTIVITY

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Prime Minister but, in his absence, I shall put it to the Acting Prime Minister.

An hon. Member: He is at the conference.

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): I see. He may be at the conference, I do not blame him.

During the last election campaign, while we had recommended it years ago, the Liberal candidates promised to grant the old age pension to spouses at age 60. Recently, while answering a question I put to him the Prime minister said that we would have until the 1st of August of 1975 to pass this legislation in the House of Commons. Since we receive a great many letters on this subject from all parts of the country, is the minister in a position to tell us

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

whether if it is passed in July or before the 1st of August 1975, this legislation will be retroactive to July 8, 1974?

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, when the legislation is brought down, the hon. member will have the answer to his question.

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TRADE

REASON FOR ALLEGED DECLINE IN EXPORTS—GOVERNMENT
ACTION

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. As exports increased by 28 per cent during the first nine months of this year compared with the same period a year ago—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hees: Just wait until you get the bad news.—and the prices of those same products increased by no less than 37 per cent—

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Hees:—leaving a decrease of 6 per cent in the volume of exports during the first nine months of this year, does the government intend to do anything to reverse this accelerating trend and, if so, what and when?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, in the first eight months of this year, Canada's exports of end products were 5.1 per cent higher than for the same period a year ago.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gillespie: Second, the largest increase in physical volume, as distinct from value, has taken place in end products, excluding automobiles.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, the minister did not make any attempt to answer my question. He dealt with a specific type of export over an eight month period whereas the nine month figures are available to him. His answer made clear his indifference to this whole question. What has happened to the former determination and ability of this department to overcome difficult situations, which characterized its operations under a former regime?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, I would like to reassure the hon. member that the government's priority given to the Export Development Corporation indicates the very high priority we are placing on assisting Canadian exporters to remain internationally competitive.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, I have one final supplementary. Is the minister not aware that the principles employed by the Export Development Corporation are those which were initiated by the government of which I just spoke and have been developed by his government following our