

[Translation]

HISTORIC SITESREQUEST AGED PERSONS HAVE ACCESS BY MOTOR VEHICLES—
MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 43, I ask for the unanimous consent of the House to introduce a very important motion.

In view of the fact that the Plains of Abraham at the top of Cape Diamond in Quebec City are under federal jurisdiction; in view of the fact that the National Battlefields Commission is in charge of the administration of this large historic site; in view of the fact that there is a great deal of talk about prohibiting motor vehicle traffic in this area, which will be quite detrimental to aged persons because it is their only means of transport to go there, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier):

That this House urge the minister in charge of the Plains of Abraham not to allow the National Battlefields Commission to prevent aged persons and young children from gaining access to this historic site by motor vehicle.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Such a motion can be presented only with the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

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[English]

PENITENTIARIESCONSTRUCTION OF INSTITUTION AT SELKIRK, MAN.—MOTION
UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Dean Whiteway (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43 on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity. In view of the fact that there is 30 per cent unemployment in the construction industry in Manitoba, and in light of the government's decision to proceed in 1980 with a new maximum security penitentiary for Manitoba to be located in Selkirk, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Portage (Mr. Masniuk):

That the government immediately proceed with the construction of the penitentiary in order to maximize the economic benefits for both Selkirk and the province.

Mr. Speaker: Presentation of such a motion for debate requires unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

*Oral Questions***VACANCY**

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received a communication notifying me that a vacancy has occurred in the representation, namely, the Hon. Mitchell Sharp, P.C., member for the electoral district of Eglinton, by resignation. Accordingly, I have addressed my warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of a new writ of election for the said electoral district.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

DECLINE IN FARM INCOME AND INCREASE IN PRICE OF FOOD

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Finance. Yesterday, Statistics Canada released disturbing figures indicating, based on 1976 incomes, that farm incomes in Canada have declined by 6.9 per cent. I hope the Minister of Agriculture takes note of that. At the same time, the Anti-Inflation Board introduced startling figures which indicated that food prices in Canada over one month have increased by 2.6 per cent, representing an 11.9 per cent increase in the price of food, as measured by the AIB, in one year.

It is obvious the people of Canada are very unhappy about the situation, and Dr. Gallup confirmed that. What does the government propose to do about this very serious problem which is imposing such an unjust burden on middle and low income earners in this country?

● (1417)

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, since April 15 we have relied on the marketplace to decide. Hon. members opposite have been saying for the last three years that controls in Canada were not the proper instrument to control our economy. We then decided to discontinue the controls program and leave the decisions to the marketplace. If the hon. member is proposing that we reinstate controls, we can look into that.

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, the minister must still be suffering from Montezuma's revenge, because that could be the only way to explain the fact that he does not know food prices are not covered by the AIB, and never have been.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McGrath: It is obvious that food prices in Canada, according to the AIB, will continue to rise. That fact is confirmed by Statistics Canada in the consumer price index. This can be related, among other things, to the minister's floating-sinking dollar. Now that parliament will be around for a while at least, will the minister bring in measures to offset