

AGRICULTURE

REMOVAL OF TAXES ON FARM FUELS

Mr. Bill Gottselig (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, this morning the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) announced that the Government is removing all federal taxes on farm fuels for off-highway use effective May 1, 1986. The net savings to Canadian farmers resulting from this tax cut will be \$165 million over the next two years. This announcement comes at a good time for farmers who are now seeding their 1986 crops.

This measure is part of the federal Government's initiative package designed to help the agricultural and energy sectors of Canada. Other agricultural measures in the package include the introduction and speedy passage of farm debt review legislation, an increase in the maximum allowable domestic price level of wheat to \$11 per bushel, and a maintenance of WGTA producers' freight rates at the 1985-86 crop year levels.

Although these measures are not the total solution to the financial problems facing Canadian farmers, they do represent the ongoing federal commitment to agriculture. The long-term answer lies in an improved bilateral and multilateral trading environment. The old adage "Actions speak louder than words" is certainly true in this case.

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ENERGY

TAX RELIEF MEASURES FOR WESTERN INDUSTRY

Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Calgary South): Mr. Speaker, this morning the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) announced measures to assist in the survival of western Canada's most important energy industry. The Small Producer Credit of the PGRT will be increased from \$500,000 to \$2 million effective May 1 this year and for the life of the tax. The PGRT will be set to zero for Syncrude and Suncor's synthetic oil sands plants effective May 1. These measures will provide about \$100 million of relief primarily to small and medium-sized Canadian producers but also available to all companies operating in Canada.

Western producers have already reported that this will provide significant revenue tax relief which should enable small and medium-sized producers to maintain activities. A healthy energy industry in the western part of Canada contributes to a healthy economy right across the country.

Oral Questions

DISASTERS

SOVIET NUCLEAR REACTOR ACCIDENT IN UKRAINE—POSSIBLE CONTAMINATION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, the whole world is aware that over the weekend a very serious accident occurred at a Soviet nuclear power plant in Ukraine. I am sure all Canadians join with me in expressing deep concern for those individuals and families affected by the accident.

While few details of the incident have been released by the Soviets, we do know that radioactive fallout in substantial quantities can now be found in the Scandinavian countries of Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Denmark. We also learned today that as much as 13 per cent of certain critical Soviet agricultural produce, including meats and dairy products, may have been contaminated by fallout from the accident. If this is the case, there could be a serious food shortage.

I urge the Government of Canada, on behalf of all Canadians, to offer Canadian produce to the Soviet Union to replenish these contaminated food stocks, as well as to offer whatever other technical and medical assistance can be provided.

• (1415)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE ADMINISTRATION

CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES—APPLICATION TO MINISTER OF REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Deputy Prime Minister. I wish again to come to the right of the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion to continue to sit in the Cabinet.

Last September in a public letter the Prime Minister wrote to each Minister about the conflict of interest guidelines he stated:

You will find no quasi-independent agencies in this Code that will allow the Government to shirk its responsibility by saying that the problem belongs to someone else. Nor will you find anything which will relieve me and my colleagues of the necessity of exercising judgment.

Yet the Government has tried to pass its responsibility off on to the Assistant Deputy Registrar General, Mr. Boyle. I have spoken to Mr. Boyle. He did no investigation—

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Kaplan:—beyond speaking to the Minister.

How did the Government satisfy itself that the guidelines had not been violated? Is the Government satisfied that the guidelines have not been violated?