

Inquiries of the Ministry

Quebec are directly involved, is the federal government offering to take part in it and is it attending discussions in that connection?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): To my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, no such request has been made to the federal government.

* * *

[English]

GRAIN

SUGGESTED INCREASE IN TRANSITIONAL PAYMENT TO PRAIRIE FARMERS

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Agriculture, in light of the previous answer he gave today about the amount of assistance and effort the federal government is putting into agriculture, particularly western agriculture, and in view of the drop in net farm income in the three Prairie provinces of \$476 million since he joined the cabinet, whether he or his colleague from Saskatoon-Humboldt is recommending to the government a substantial increase in the \$100 million transitional payments that are presently proposed?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the \$100 million is an increase in the amount that has been appropriated for that purpose before, and it would be helpful if we could have the legislation passed so that we could pay out the money.

Mr. Benjamin: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In order that all members of the House may be co-operative and assist the Minister of Agriculture and the hon. member for Saskatoon-Humboldt, would the minister now advise whether or not the government would bring in the transitional payments as a separate item so they may be passed by the House within the next 48 hours?

* * *

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

INQUIRY AS TO AGREEMENT WITH UNITED STATES ON ARCTIC POLLUTION AND SOVEREIGNTY

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the right hon. Prime Minister. Now that the Prime Minister has concluded an agreement with the Soviet Union to solve the problems of Arctic pollution and sovereignty, can he tell the House when he will be concluding a similar agreement with our ally in North American defence, namely, the United States of America?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the premise is not quite correct. There was no agreement reached solving these problems. There was discussion of these problems and, of course, we have discussions of the problems with our friend and ally the United States all the time. There will be a meeting early in June on pollution in some of the Great Lakes between United States representatives and their Canadian counterparts.

[Mr. Caouette.]

TRANSPORT

NOVA SCOTIA-NEWFOUNDLAND FERRY RATE INCREASE—
DISCUSSION BETWEEN MINISTERS OF REGIONAL
ECONOMIC EXPANSION AND TRANSPORT

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. In view of the fact that the proposed increases in transportation rates between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland will have serious effects on the economy of the province of Newfoundland and therefore jeopardize the objective of overcoming regional disparity, does the minister intend to discuss the problem with the Minister of Transport, or has he discussed it with him, in order to try to overcome this situation?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I am having continuous discussions with the Minister of Transport.

[English]

Mr. Marshall: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister direct the Atlantic Development Board to look into this action, which will seriously affect the economy of the province, and report back to the House?

NOTIFICATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND PRINCE EDWARD
ISLAND OF INTENTION TO ALLOW FERRY RATE
INCREASES

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question which I should like to address to the Prime Minister. Since communication with and transportation to and from the rest of Canada were factors in the joining of Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland in confederation, did the government inform the governments of these two provinces of its intention to allow a very large increase in transportation costs between those provinces and the mainland?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will have to take the question as notice. I know of no such information having been imparted.

REQUEST THAT NOVA SCOTIA-NEWFOUNDLAND FERRY
RATE INCREASE BE SUSPENDED PENDING INVESTIGATION

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question which I will direct to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport. Would he ask the Minister of Transport to set aside the present rate increases, which are as high as 80 per cent above the present level, until the total effect of this move can be ascertained and the charge that there is a contravention of the terms of union of the province of Newfoundland with the rest of Canada is fully investigated?

Mr. Gérard Duquet (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will gladly turn this question over to the minister when he returns from Europe.