

Oral Questions

of this country, there is no question in my mind where I am going to stand.

I do not know what useful purpose it serves to point to an example beyond this country. Indeed, if other countries follow the same example which has been established by this Government and the farmers of this country, we would not be facing many of the difficulties we face today in the international market-place.

MARKET PRICES—MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister. If the Minister is intending that farmers respond only to market forces, and he is not going to interfere in the market, does that then mean that he is prepared to give up and permit the foreclosures through FCC and the other institutions to recommence? Has he decided there is no hope as he is reading the signals of the market, which are that grain prices ought to be down at least another 20 per cent in the coming year from the 20 per cent in the previous year? Is he now sending out a signal that they should not be producing anything, that they should give up and walk off their farms?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, that is just a silly observation. I think everyone in the House would recognize that there are certain things that Governments should do and can do, but—

Mr. Broadbent: And won't do.

Mr. Wise:—I am sure there is not a person in the House who would suggest that the Government of Canada, particularly, and even this Government, which has done so much for Canadian agriculture, should be involved in or dictating what farmers should plant in the 1987 season. Surely he is not suggesting that we do that.

Mr. Broadbent: No, he was not. You are right.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

ACID RAIN—UNITED STATES PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, my question is addressed to the Minister of the Environment. According to a Canadian Press report, the Prime Minister is quoted as saying today that President Reagan's intention to seek funds for innovative technology projects to control acid rain is a "very significant movement". How can the Prime Minister claim a very significant movement if all that will happen is more of the same, namely, research, with no commitment to cut acid rain, no percentage cuts, no deadline, no programs, just more research?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member for Davenport is probably congenitally incapable of coping with good news. He will acknowledge with fairness that I probably have been as critical as anyone else in this House of the lack of action by the U.S. administration, following up on the last summit between the Prime Minister and the President. However, with equal fairness he will acknowledge that today's statement is a major statement by the President of the United States by any standard. I think it is probably the most detailed, most categorical commitment to joint action between the two countries on acid rain ever made by the President of the United States.

We have much more to do. The President and the Prime Minister will be meeting in Ottawa in a few weeks for that purpose. I especially welcome in the President's statement today a commitment "to future specific actions". That is the kind of constructive internationalism which produces results.

REQUEST FOR SIGNING OF CANADA-UNITED STATES AGREEMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, according to the same Canadian Press report, the Minister of the Environment did not seem to be quite happy with the news himself. He is quoted as saying: "We do not have 'signed on the dotted line'...". Can the Minister of the Environment assure the House and Canadians that at the next summit in April the Prime Minister will get President Reagan to sign with Canada an "on the dotted line" agreement of joint cutting of acid rain?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be partisan, much less do I want to make invidious comparisons, but the fact is that the Government of which the Hon. Member for Davenport was a member cut off negotiations with the Americans altogether on acid rain in June of 1982. To the credit of the Prime Minister, he put acid rain back on the agenda. He put the issue back on the rails. We in Canada do not yet have the accord we want, but today's announcement out of Washington is a very significant step in that direction, and the Prime Minister deserves the credit.

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AGRICULTURE

CANADA-UNITED STATES TRADE NEGOTIATIONS—POSSIBLE EFFECT ON DAIRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. The Minister will know that a free trade agreement which would allow the free flow of food products into Canada would seriously hurt Canadian food producers. Is the Government, while it is saying it will protect farm marketing boards and