

Oral Questions

early in September which has as a direct consequence the moderating of the rate of increase in the money supply.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, I have a further supplementary, again addressed to the Minister of Finance. With regard to the minister's observation that a rising prime rate will ensure restraint in respect of the growth of the money system, would he indicate to the House why that has not taken place over the last three years when our money supply has jumped by over 60 per cent?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could suggest to the hon. gentleman to his benefit that he study the very eloquent remarks of the Governor of the Bank of Canada in this respect.

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AGRICULTURE

BROILER INDUSTRY—CHARGES RETURNS TO PRODUCERS THROUGH MARKETING BOARD VERY HIGH—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture and is prompted by his statement that Canadians have nothing to fear from well-run marketing agencies. In view of the statement contained in the report of the Food Prices Review Board on the broiler industry in Canada that the average return on equity to many producers in the broiler industry is extremely high by normal business standards, and further in view of the charge of the board that the federal government will take more vigorous action to combat and eliminate constraints to interprovincial trade by the broiler industry which is contrary to the BNA Act, I ask the minister will he respond to the very serious charges and does he intend to investigate them?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Well, Mr. Speaker, I have not had time to study the new report the Food Prices Review Board has submitted. But I would just remind the hon. member that broiler prices in Canada went up 14 per cent last year while they went up 23 per cent in the United States, and there is no control on imports into Canada. Imports went up from 3,209,000, pounds to 10,373,000, pounds. So there is really no control; we have no control on supply-management. Each of the provinces has its own individual broiler program and before a national agency for broiler marketing is put into force, public hearings would have to be held in accordance with the legislation which this parliament passed some time ago.

● (1430)

SUGGESTED REFERENCE TO ANTI-INFLATION BOARD OF CHARGES MADE AGAINST PRODUCERS OF BROILERS

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): My question is addressed to the Minister of Finance. Would the minister refer to the Anti-Inflation Board the charge made by the Food Prices Review Board that the return on equity to producers in the broiler industry is extremely high by normal business standards?

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): I have reason to believe that the facts in this respect may already be well known to at least one member of the anti-inflation review board, but I will make a point of reminding her of it.

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TRANSPORT

FREIGHT RATES—REQUEST BY BEEF PRODUCERS FOR DELAY OF INCREASE IN RATES

Mr. C. Douglas (Bruce-Grey): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. In view of the fact that the Ontario Beef Improvement Association has expressed grave concern with both CNR and CPR about increased freight rates over the last year—three very substantial increases totalling 49 per cent have been imposed and last week the association was informed that another increase of 15 per cent would be imposed on November 15, making it the fourth increase in less than a year, which would indeed be a hardship on the beef producers of Ontario—would the minister urge both CNR and CPR to withhold any increase until a later date in the interest of combating inflation, and will he also arrange a meeting with the Ontario Beef Improvement Association in the near future to discuss all aspects of freight rate increases and the alarming decrease in rail service over the past year?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I certainly share the hon. member's concern and that of associations in both the east and the west in relation to higher freight rates on beef and other meat. I hope that at the very least the railways may be reviewing their proposed increases in the light of the guidelines. I think it would also be appropriate for the proposals to be brought to the attention of the anti-inflation review board. I would of course be delighted to meet with the beef associations.

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FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

SUGGESTION MEETING WITH PROVINCIAL FINANCE MINISTERS BE HELD IN PUBLIC

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Has the government received representations from any of the provinces suggesting that meetings of the finance ministers which will be held Wednesday and Thursday be held in public?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if there have been such representations, they have not come to my attention. I do hope to receive a briefing from my officials later this afternoon following their meetings this morning with provincial officials. I will be in a better position later today to respond to the hon. member's question.

Mr. Orlikow: In view of the need of the Canadian people to know as much as possible about the anti-inflation program proposed by the government, and how it will affect them, if they are to co-operate to make the program work, will the minister give serious consideration to the