

Oral Questions

Mr. Clark: Since the minister was expressing these personal views when he attended a national conference in his public capacity as a responsible minister in the field of urban affairs, will the Prime Minister indicate to the House of Commons at the earliest possible opportunity, since this matter has now been raised, the precise position of the government in relation to the constitutional status of municipalities? Will he also, since the matter has been raised by his responsible colleague, give us a categorical assurance that there will not be the proposed encroachment into provincial jurisdiction in the field of municipal affairs without concrete, advance discussion with the provinces?

Mr. Trudeau: I say once again, Mr. Speaker, that I have not seen the particular words to which the hon. member refers. If they referred to municipal affairs, then of course under the present constitution municipal affairs come under the jurisdiction of the provinces. When we get to constitutional discussions on a new sharing of powers, of course, we will be prepared to discuss even this aspect of jurisdiction. No doubt the Minister of State for Urban Affairs has some views on that. But because municipal affairs come under provincial jurisdiction does not mean that everything having to do with municipalities comes under the jurisdiction of the provinces. We take a contrary view and I support the minister in so far as he takes that view.

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, I want to reserve a supplementary question in the hope that the minister will eventually show up.

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LOTO CANADA**EXTENSION OF LOTTERY**

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport and it is based on my understanding that she is meeting tomorrow with the provincial ministers to discuss the general area of Loto Canada.

Is she prepared, today, to give the House the assurance that the commitment which was made by the Prime Minister in 1976, as well as by the Minister of Finance, namely, not to extend Loto Canada beyond 1979 without the agreement of the House and, what is more important, without the agreement of the provinces, will be respected at her meeting tomorrow with the provincial ministers, and that the meeting will be based on that underlying principle?

Hon. Iona Campagnolo (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport)): Mr. Speaker, the commitment was made to have legislation in the House if we should wish to continue the lottery. I think we should put first things first. I should meet with our provincial colleagues first, which I am undertaking tomorrow, and if we move into a future lottery I will be pleased to bring it to the floor of the House for discussion.

Mr. Oberle: Will the minister be discussing tomorrow with the provinces the extension of the lottery beyond 1979 and, as well, further cost-sharing agreements? Furthermore, will she undertake to report to the House, so that in future we can avoid these on-again-off-again negotiations, the outcome of the discussions with the provinces so the House will know where the provinces stand on this very important question which is also under provincial jurisdiction?

Mrs. Campagnolo: There is no clear jurisdiction in lotteries. Obviously, the Fathers of Confederation did not foresee such an event. I will be very pleased to report to the House in due course when I bring in legislation, if I do bring in legislation to the House.

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS**BEEF: PRICE INCREASES FAVOURING MORE EXPENSIVE CUTS—
PRICE OF SKIM MILK POWDER**

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and they relate to the price of a couple of particular foods. I am sure the minister is aware of the fact that farmers are now, finally, getting a decent and well deserved price increase for the beef they are producing.

● (1422)

I ask the minister a question arising out of studies done by the Manitoba department of agriculture which show that in the city of Winnipeg, from August 12, 1977, to May 26, 1978, the price of hamburger increased by 128 per cent and blade roast by 120 per cent, and that more expensive cuts such as T-bone steaks increased by only 19 per cent and sirloin steaks by 27 per cent.

Is the minister aware of this tremendous price differential? Can he explain to the House why the cheaper cuts which lower income earners have to buy have gone up by such a drastic amount in the last few months, while the more expensive cuts while are purchased by wealthy people have had only minor price increases?

Hon. Warren Allmand (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that with the shortage of beef there is less low-price beef available to lower income consumers. We are very much concerned about that, and I will be discussing some initiatives with my colleagues very shortly.

Mr. Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, also in the area of food prices, on Tuesday, May 30, 1978, the minister said he would be looking into the tremendous increase in the price of skim milk powder. As we know, in April the Minister of Agriculture took off the 34 cents per pound subsidy on skim milk powder. Price increases have been as high as 45 cents and 46 cents a pound. Now that the minister has had approximately seven or eight