

*Oral Questions***BEEF CATTLE—SUGGESTED INCLUSION OF GRADES B AND C
IN SUBSIDY PROGRAM**

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, we are rapidly reaching the point where there is no hope at all, let alone false hope. I should like to ask the minister in respect of the question of subsidies on beef whether he will include grades B and C as well as A grades in that subsidy program so that the confusion which now exists in the stockyards can be straightened out, and so that the producer as well as the processor will have some confidence in this program?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I should like to correct any wrong impression I may have given in my answer to the hon. member for Crowfoot. I meant the packing firms. Some of them have been co-operating and if they all co-operate this program can be successful.

In answer to the last hon. member's question, we are considering these things, but I am not holding out any false hopes again because in the North American market, where the actions of one country complement those of another, the United States government is spending \$45 million to take red brand meat off the market and they are just using the top brands.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Laval and then the hon. member for Vegreville.

* * *

[Translation]

TRANSPORT**PROPOSED RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM BETWEEN MONTREAL
AND MIRABEL AIRPORT**

Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval): Mr. Speaker, since the hon. Minister of Transport is absent, I will direct my question to his parliamentary secretary.

This question is very important, Mr. Speaker, since it concerns the proposed construction of an electric train rapid transit system using the existing CP and CN rail lines between downtown Montreal and Mirabel Airport via the City of Laval. What will be the terms of the agreement between the various levels of government to deal successfully with the realization of such a project?

[English]

Mr. Joseph-Philippe Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I would like to answer in French. If I give the answer in English I will probably be criticized once again, but I know we are in a bilingual country.

[Translation]

The recommendation respecting the utilization of an electric train transit system is the result of a joint study by the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion and the Quebec Department of Transport. The government wishes to continue its consultations with the other levels of government in this respect before fixing its choice on a particular transit system.

[Mr. Horner (Crowfoot).]

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will not comment on the procedure we have just witnessed and about which I have serious reservations.

* * *

AGRICULTURE**BEEF CATTLE—POSSIBLE MANIPULATION OF SUBSIDY
PROGRAM BY PACKERS—GOVERNMENT ACTION**

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the fact that the government has now become very deeply involved in the meat marketing process I should like to ask whether he is monitoring and examining the purchasing policies of the various packers throughout the country since evidence would indicate that packers have been taking undue advantage of producers through the manipulation of prices and by deliberately refusing to purchase cattle from a number of producers, thereby creating additional chaos and confusion in the marketing process?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, we are getting replies from our people and others in all parts of the country, and we are trying to put these together because we are to meet with officials of the cattle industry tomorrow.

Mr. Mazankowski: I have a supplementary question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We have reached the end of the question period. Perhaps the hon. member for Vegreville could be allowed to ask his supplementary question, after which the Chair will have to call orders of the day.

● (1520)

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister whether his department intends to take any specific action if the evidence indicates there is undue manipulation and deliberate withholding of purchases in this regard?

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, if we find evidence, as the hon. member is suggesting, that this practice is taking place and is contrary to any law we certainly will recommend that action be taken under whatever legislation is on the books that would allow us to do so.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day. The hon. member for Calgary South rises on a question of privilege.

Mr. Bawden: Mr. Speaker, the usually sensible and practical Minister of Supply and Services made a statement to the effect that the Conservatives sometime sit and do nothing. Earlier this week the Minister of Supply and Services made some impractical, irresponsible statements regarding a plan for the development of the tar sands in Alberta. No doubt he is able to do so because he expects in the near future he and his colleagues will be sitting in opposition.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Will the hon. member indicate in what way he feels his parliamentary privilege has