

Oral Questions

• (1430)

We have been able to help the economy and the provinces through means that were announced by the Minister of Finance last week and, I might say, well accepted by them. There is a budget coming up later on, in the not too distant—

Mr. Speaker: I think we will really have to move on.

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GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg—St. James): Although it took a week, Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the NDP's support of the Liberal public works program.

My question is for the Acting Prime Minister. Canadian agriculture has a huge stake in the GATT negotiations and the so-called Dunkel report has prompted grave concerns in the supply management sector.

The government should share with us what it knows about the possible effects of the Dunkel proposals on supply management. We take it that the government has already completed an impact study. Would the government table that document in the House this afternoon? After all, Canadians deserve to know the contents of that study. The life of an industry is on the line.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member well knows, the Government of Canada is also concerned about the impact of the Dunkel report and has made those views known directly to Mr. Dunkel, to some of the other contracting members of the GATT, as well as to the members of the farm community.

We have shared with the farm community, at its request, a study that has been done on what the levels of the tariff equivalents might be were the Dunkel proposal in effect. That was done at the request of the farm community. It has not requested an impact study so that work has not been done.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the same minister.

I have good reason to believe that copies of an impact study have already been given to government members.

Since these issues affect farmers and Canadians in general, will the minister table in this House all matters related to the GATT talks and their impact on the agricultural industry?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture made this very clear, and we will mention it this afternoon, because—for the hon. member's information—the federal-provincial conference on agriculture is scheduled to start in about half an hour.

Incidentally, the marketing board community and Canadian farm leaders did not ask for a specific impact study on these factors. They even asked us to leave the tariff system alone.

In any case, Mr. Speaker, if Canadian farm leaders say they wish to discuss these aspects, we will of course consider doing so. So far, however, we have had no requests for a study of the impact of tariffs on marketing boards, Mr. Speaker.

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[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Minister of Finance. His boss the Minister of Finance said, according to Canadian Press, that he would be "a monkey's uncle if anyone can find money in the federal budget to finance a cut in the GST". Mr. Speaker, you had better break out the bananas for the minister.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): I say this because Matthew Barrett, chairman of the Bank of Montreal, says that because of lower interest charges the government does have the money either to spend or cut taxes to get the economy moving.

I ask the acting minister: Will the government bring forward a full program to get the economy moving and to create jobs without further delay and certainly no later than the next budget?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): I know my hon. friend fairly well, Mr. Speaker. I am surprised that he did not look into the figures that Matthew Barrett brought out before he