

AGRICULTURE

EFFECT OF ECONOMIC POLICY—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. G. M. Gurbin (Bruce-Grey): Madam Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43 on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity. In view of the importance of agriculture to our national economy, with interest rate increases and farm operating costs rising faster than the consumer price index, so that net farm income will grow only slightly in 1981, in spite of consumers facing at least a 15 per cent increase in food prices next year; in view of major fuel oil, diesel, gasoline and probably fertilizer costs yet to be added in the coming year; in view of the questionable impact of the Minister of Agriculture on the deliberations of the Minister of Finance, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Oxford (Mr. Halliday):

That the Minister of Finance be examined for fiscal fitness by those interested and capable in agricultural economics and bring forward an assessment of present government policies in the context of Canadian and world economies to determine the effects on our agricultural community and to submit recommendations.

Madam Speaker: Presentation of such a motion requires the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

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[Translation]

AIRPORTS

REQUEST GOVERNMENT RECEIVE REPRESENTATION FROM ROUYN-NORANDA—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Henri Tousignant (Témiscamingue): Madam Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 43, I ask for the unanimous consent of the House to move a motion dealing with an important matter of pressing and urgent necessity.

In view of the fact that a delegation representing businessmen from my constituency and the mayors of Rouyn-Noranda came to Ottawa to meet with Department of Transport officials concerning the installation of equipment which is absolutely essential for the Rouyn airport, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Abitibi (Mr. Gingras):

That this delegation receive the whole attention of the Department of Transport, which attention it should have got a long time ago.

Madam Speaker: Presentation of such a motion under the provisions of Standing Order 43 requires the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Oral Questions

● (1415)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

UNEMPLOYMENT—STIMULATION OF CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. He must have noted that employment in the Canadian construction industry is down by 50,000 Canadian workers, half of those workers being from Ontario alone and 30 per cent from Quebec. If the minister has noted that, will he tell us whether any study is being given to some type of new approach to stimulate the construction industry in this country, bearing in mind the minister gave such short shrift to the mortgage interest and property tax program of the Clark government which would have ensured that those 50,000 Canadians would not be out of work today as they are?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I have noticed the variation in employment in the goods-producing industry, which includes construction. Having noted that, I have also noted that the over-all, seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Canada decreased over the past month, that decrease in unemployment having been registered in almost all regions of the country.

Mr. Stevens: Madam Speaker, surely that reply is only reflective of the callous attitude of this government—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stevens:—which hands us seasonally adjusted figures but ignores the fact there are more Canadians out of work today than there were previously.

My question is again directed to the Minister of Finance. Has he noticed that the Canadian Manufacturers' Association has stated that the decision to deem marginal manufacturing liable to federal sales tax has created a great groundswell of concern among their members, a groundswell that has not been experienced for a long time and has contributed to the unemployment with which we are now living in the manufacturing sector? If the minister is aware of CMA's comment that by simply redefining manufacturing to include marginal manufacturing he is triggering more unemployment in this country, will the minister correct the mistake he made in his budget?

Mr. MacEachen: Madam Speaker, I should point out to the hon. member that the unemployment rate for November, 1980, is precisely the same unemployment rate which existed a year ago when the hon. member's seatmate brought in a budget which, if it had been accepted by the House of Commons, would have had very serious and deep effects on the unemployment situation in Canada. I want to tell the hon.