

Oral Questions

Mr. Stevens: Good morning. Mr. Speaker, those are the kinds of positive questions that the Canadian public wants to hear more of.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Deans: In the meantime could someone tell him what he was asked?

Mr. Stevens: I think that the fact that Paramax are opening up this new research facility in Montreal and giving work to 500 people in that area is something that should be commended. The fact that they are using \$11 million of their own money with respect to this development, I think speaks that much more in favour of the project. In short, instead of the doom and gloom that pour out of that other side, this is Canada in action. Jobs for Canadians!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

DAIRY POLICY—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Alain Tardif (Richmond-Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Agriculture.

Quebec dairy producers are very concerned, because they are still waiting for the long-term dairy policy they have been promised any number of times. In fact, a decision was to be announced on August 1. It is now October 25, and your Department has yet to announce its dairy policy.

Could the Minister inform the House what the reasons are behind the delay in announcing the Government's intentions in this respect.

[English]

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am interested in the Hon. Member's question and also his observation with reference to a delay. I want to assure him that there certainly has not been a delay, there is no question about that. No commitment was made to make any announcement on the long-term dairy policy—

Mr. Nunziata: Yes, there was. You promised a committee.

Mr. Wise: —on August 1. They are confused; they don't understand it. What was required and what we did on August 1 was announce a price increase. There was no commitment to announce a long-term dairy policy then, or on September 1, September 15, or November 1.

● (1150)

The Hon. Member should know that I appointed two very capable individuals to carry out a study and to consult with everyone in the industry. I will be receiving the report of the two individuals, Mr. Everett Biggs and Mr. Benoît Lavigne,

since they have consulted widely across the country with all sectors of the industry.

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Wise: I will be receiving that report—

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Wise: I will be receiving that report in perhaps about two weeks' time. I am sure Hon. Members will recognize that I will need another two or three weeks to study the ramifications of the report—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We thank the Minister for his answer.

[Translation]

REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL COMMITMENT

Mr. Alain Tardif (Richmond-Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the same Minister. Could the Minister make a firm commitment before the House that the dairy policy will be a long-term one and that it will not include any cutbacks whatsoever, as you promised time and time again during the last election campaign?

[English]

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the dairy farmers of Canada have been asking for a long-term dairy policy for the past eight years. The previous Government refused to give it to them. However, we will be—

Mr. Foster: What are you going to give them?

Mr. Wise: I cannot give any deadline. I am always reluctant to do that. I want to go through the proper course of action. I want to take the time to consult with all people in the industry. It is obvious that we are nearing completion of that process. In good faith, I would expect that I would be in a position—I hope I will be in a position—prior to the end of the year to announce what the long-term dairy policy will be.

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PETRO-CANADA

AUDITING CONTRACT

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Last week I raised with her colleague, the Minister of Finance, the question of why the PetroCan contract for auditing its books had been suddenly switched by an Order in Council to a Chicago-run company called Arthur Andersen & Co., which is the largest auditing firm in the world. I have a list in my hand of the names of 20 partners of the Arthur Andersen firm who have given at least \$1,000 each to the Conservative Party in the last year.

Some Hon. Members: Shame!