

ince through whatever program it might wish to develop. We are also developing a program through the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion to aid agriculture in Newfoundland to the extent of several million dollars so that the industry there can become more efficient.

#### ACTION TO ENSURE PACKING PLANTS PASS ON BEEF SUBSIDY TO PRODUCERS

**Mr. Bill Knight (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, since the livestock market is still in an extremely precarious position, may I address a question to the Minister of Agriculture arising from the hon. gentleman's statement in the Standing Committee on Agriculture that some of the large packing firms were not co-operating in this program? Can the minister tell us what type of regulation and control he is considering imposing upon the packing plants to ensure that the subsidy is in fact passed on to producers?

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** I can only reassure the hon. member that our desire is to ensure that this beef premium does go back to the producers. That is where it is supposed to go, and if everyone in the industry—I mean everyone, the organizations representing the cattlemen, the packers, the Meat Packers' Council, the beef producers organizations—if they all co-operate they can make this plan work.

#### ALLEGED CATTLE MALNUTRITION IN SASKATCHEWAN BECAUSE OF BAD WEATHER AND FEED SHORTAGE

**Mr. Frank Hamilton (Swift Current-Maple Creek):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. Is the minister aware that bad weather and extreme shortages of feed have left cattle starving or suffering from malnutrition, with the result that the situation has reached emergency proportions in parts of Saskatchewan? What action is the minister prepared to take in this regard?

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** This has been suggested before, Mr. Speaker. I have asked the health of animals branch for a report. I am sure the hon. member knows that the first responsibility falls on the provincial authorities. As yet, I believe they have not made representations for aid. Our figures show that in fact there is not the amount of starvation and malnutrition that some people are suggesting. This situation occurs every winter to some extent. It is a very difficult job to police every person who has a cow.

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#### RESTRICTIVE TRADE PRACTICES COMMISSION

##### REQUEST THAT VACANCIES IN MEMBERSHIP BE FILLED IMMEDIATELY

**Mr. Terry Grier (Toronto-Lakeshore):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs arising from the statement by the acting chairman of the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission that he is unable to carry out his responsibilities because of a lack of staff. Does the minister intend to fill the

#### Oral Questions

vacancies on the commission immediately and, if not, why not?

**Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** It had been the intention of the government to make appointments to the commission when we have a better idea of the decision of parliament on the form of the new competition law. However, this matter is under consideration and it is likely the government will be in a position to make an announcement shortly.

**Mr. Grier:** In view of the fact there have been continuous vacancies on this commission for four years, would the minister tell us why the government feels it was suitable or proper for those vacancies to continue for such a long period? How does he expect parliament or the country to give credence to his assertions that he intends to give the commission greater responsibilities when he will not—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member's supplementary is argumentative and not a proper question.

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#### AGRICULTURE

##### BRUCELLOSIS—LEVEL OF COMPENSATION PAID FARMERS WHOSE HERDS DESTROYED

**Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Minister of Agriculture. On March 6 the minister announced plans in the House to reconsider the level of compensations to be paid to farmers whose herds had to be destroyed because of brucellosis. He was going to make a submission to the government. Has that submission been made, and when does the minister plan to make an announcement?

● (1150)

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, the submission has been made and an announcement will be made soon.

**Mr. Baker:** Would the minister inform the House whether there was an element of retroactivity in respect of this matter in the submission made to his colleagues?

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will have to be patient and wait for "soon".

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#### ENERGY

##### AGREEMENT WITH PROVINCES ON PRICE OF CANADIAN CRUDE OIL—AMOUNT OF ALBERTA AND SASKATCHEWAN REVENUES SUBJECT TO EQUALIZATION

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the right hon. Prime Minister in respect of the equalization aspect of the agreement reached with the provinces on Wednesday. The Prime Minister said there would be equalization payments of at least \$100 million. Does this arise from some informa-