

and the industry that the present levels of quotas on Oceanic beef will be maintained in 1978?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, negotiations have been going on regarding quotas on Oceanic beef with our other trading partners, the United States and Argentina, and an announcement will be made shortly concerning these quotas which should not be much different from what they were before. But I would remind the hon. member that when he speaks about depressed beef prices, he is not 100 per cent correct. They are on the increase and have been for some months. It appears that we are out of the bleak picture in which we found ourselves for a couple of years with regard to beef prices. My colleague, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, and I are working very closely on this with the other countries concerned.

BEEF—POSSIBILITY OF REQUEST FROM AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND FOR INCREASED ALLOTMENT

Mr. Bert Hargrave (Medicine Hat): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Agriculture. We have noticed recently that Canada's allotment to the U.S. was increased by some five million pounds. The announcement was made perhaps a week or ten days ago. Has the minister received a request from Australia and New Zealand that their allotment for some 120 million pounds for this year be extended upwards in view of the U.S. allocation to Canada?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): I think it would be only natural for them, if they have a surplus of beef, to want to sell more, but just because they made a request does not mean we will grant it because we have established a fairly good quota. If there is any modification in it, the change will be very small. I should remind the hon. member also, as I am sure he is aware, that the U.S. have not filled one third of their beef quota to Canada.

Mr. Hargrave: I want to assure the minister that I am well aware of that situation, but I want to ask him a supplementary question. Is it the intention of the government to increase those allocations for the balance of this year? I am not asking him whether or not he has received a request but whether it is his intention to increase the allocations to Australia and New Zealand above the 120 million pounds?

Mr. Whelan: No decision has been made at this time and it is our intention to protect the beef producers of Canada.

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AIR TRANSPORT

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO ENFORCEMENT OF SAFETY REGULATIONS—ENFORCEMENT PROBLEMS OUTSIDE ONTARIO

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. In view of the fact that investigators have found that air safety regulations in northwestern Ontario have frequently been disobeyed, thereby

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jeopardizing the travelling public, and that attempts to discipline the offending aviation firms have been overruled by somebody in Ottawa, thereby raising the spectre of political influence, I should like to ask the minister when he will institute an independent public inquiry into this problem which the minister knows is the only effective way to clear the way and regain public confidence.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): In fact, of course, the investigation which revealed the necessary facts upon which to act has already given us the information required. It is my intention to act upon that information. I have already done so in some respects and I expect to make a complete statement of the progress being made in the very near future.

Mr. Symes: The minister very carefully avoided the question of political influence and we need to get to the bottom of it. I would like to ask the minister a supplementary question. Can the minister assure the House that the lack of enforcement of air safety regulations has been confined only to northwestern Ontario and is not a national problem? I ask this with particular reference to representations made to the minister by the Canadian Airline Dispatchers Association.

● (1442)

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the issue raised by the airline dispatchers is really quite a separate one, but I should say that the question of enforcement of regulations is one which extends beyond the Ontario region, and after our review of the requirement for more inspectors we proposed the addition of 12 inspectors, who will be located in various regions of the country, although an extensive number of them will be for the Ontario and western region which covers northern Ontario. I think this will go a long way toward improving enforcement of regulations, and we are making other changes to ensure that too.

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HEALTH

SUGGESTED DELAY OF BAN ON SACCHARIN TO PERMIT COMPANIES TO REDUCE INVENTORY

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the fact that the United States has set an 18-month moratorium on the saccharin ban, and in view of the fact that the saccharin ban imposed last March by the Canadian government has caused severe hardship to companies involved in the production of the sweetener, is the minister prepared to extend the regulations so that these companies might sell off their remaining stock in order to offset some of the very heavy costs they have incurred so far?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): No, Mr. Speaker. We have refused this request more than once. Our studies have confirmed the validity of