

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to inform the Hon. Member that we had a meeting with representatives of the Canadian Consumers' Association last week, at which time we gave them the assurance that no changes would be made before consultations had been held with this group.

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[English]

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUOTAS AND PRICES

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. Traditionally the Government has announced opening quotas and initial prices for western grains around the first of March. This is essential information for farmers in planning their seeding and so on. We are now within about a month of seeding commencement in western Canada. Could the Minister end the uncertainty which exists as a result of not providing this information, and immediately announce the initial prices and quotas for the new crop year?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, indeed the Hon. Member is correct that in the past the previous Government attempted to get them out by the first of March, but in some cases it did not get them out until well into May when seeding was under way. We are presently going through the process of setting initial prices. The Hon. Member will be happy to learn that today we are putting to press a revised form of the pre-seeded acreage report, which we feel will be of much more use to prairie producers than the one that was put out previously and was largely political propaganda.

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WESTERN GRAIN STABILIZATION ACT

ADVANCE PAYMENTS

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I note the Minister is not prepared to announce the initial quotas and prices today. Could he assure farmers that the initial prices and quotas will be at least as high as last year? Would he be prepared to indicate that the advance payment under the Western Grain Stabilization Program will be made within the next month, and that it would be at least \$700 million?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, with regard to initial prices, it is well known that grain prices around the world are suffering. We will do the best we possibly can with initial prices. The Hon. Member should know with regard to quotas that there is every indication that for the rest of the crop year there will virtually be open quotas because of the fact that we suffered a poor crop. It looks very good for high quotas for the coming year.

Oral Questions

With regard to an interim payment under the Western Grain Stabilization Act, we have the mechanism in place and we expect to have cash in the hands of producers well before the first of May.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH CANADIAN SPACE AGENCY

Mr. Allan Pietz (Welland): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Science and Technology. The Aerospace Industries Association of Canada in public statement recently called for the creation of a Canadian space agency to eliminate what the Association termed as fragmentation in the management of Canada's programs and policies with regard to space. I should like to ask the Minister for his response, and what his recommendation to the Government will be regarding this suggestion.

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Member's question. We all recognize and appreciate the commitment of our aerospace industry to the economic development of the country over the past 25 years. We are looking seriously at recommendations submitted by the Aerospace Industries Association and by other interested groups. We would take note, particularly, of the suggestion that a committee of Cabinet should co-ordinate the work of such an agency. Indeed that is the role of the Cabinet committee on economic and regional development at the present time and the interdepartmental committee on space. We will continue to manage our space program effectively.

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TRUST COMPANIES

PIONEER TRUST—PLIGHT OF UNINSURED DEPOSITORS

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the government Member who answers on behalf of the Minister of State for Finance, and written notice has been given. Since the collapse of Pioneer Trust on February 7, there has been considerable speculation about the fate of uninsured depositors. Can the Government inform us if there are still ongoing negotiations with the Government of Saskatchewan that can result in some compensation to the many uninsured depositors?

● (1500)

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I want first to thank the Hon. Member for the notice given. As the Hon. Member knows, there have been numerous discussions between the two levels of Government. I want to assure the Hon. Member that CDIC has taken steps to reimburse all insured depositors up to the insured limit. A great many of them have already been reimbursed. With