

Oral Questions

after with the second package which will contain all the improvements that may be made to it.

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, a complete overview is very different from legislation. As I said, Canadians only have part of the picture.

Certainly a major way to promote harmony in this industry is to work with the provinces to establish similar regulations across the whole country, yet this minister refuses invitations from provinces to attend the annual conference of ministers responsible for financial institutions.

Why has the minister refused these invitations? Will he agree to start attending these conferences?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons we did not proceed with all the legislation at the same time is that maybe we were afraid that her hon. colleagues in the Senate would have indigestion. They have been slowing down our legislation. We would not want to overwork them, would we?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Speaker: I think the question had something to do with invitations.

Mr. Loiselle: Second, the hon. member would probably be very disappointed if I were to send to her copies of the letters I received from the provincial ministers today who were highly complimentary about our movements.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. I remind him of a pledge that he made some days ago.

He promised compensation to farmers for lost sales to Iraq. I also remind him that the Trudeau government paid compensation to farmers about 10 years ago during the Afghanistan crisis. Of course this embargo on sales to Iraq could not come at a worse time because farmers desperately need cash right now.

Could the hon. Minister of Agriculture make an announcement now with respect to this matter?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would know that it took the Trudeau administration two years to calculate the hurt that was inflicted. We are monitoring the situation and, if in fact there is any injury to the producers, it would be taken into consideration.

I think the member is aware that the embargo was put in place sometime in the fall of 1979. I believe it was in the latter part of 1981 when adjustments for that were made. I think he understands the reasons for that.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, I don't think we should be quibbling over timing. Let's get the job done.

On top of lost sales to Iraq, farmers are experiencing other problems. Bankruptcies are up dramatically in the first eight months of this year, income may drop as much as 67 per cent in some parts of the agricultural community, and of course farmers as consumers are having to face this horrible GST.

Has the minister met with farm leaders or will he meet with farm leaders to come up with a compensation package?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I have met with most farm leaders and organizations on this particular issue. They think they understand it, quite unlike the hon. member who has posed the question.

I should also remind the hon. member that most of the commitments, if not all, under the long-term agreement with Iraq for the supply of wheat were filled for 1990. How could there be any major loss or significant loss when in fact the bulk of the commitments under the long-term agreement were filled for 1990?

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[Translation]

HOUSING

Mrs. Marie Gibeau (Bourassa): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of State for Housing. The five-year federal co-operative housing program is due to expire soon. Considering that almost 75 per cent of Montrealers are tenants and that this program is of vital importance to them, I should like to know what measures the minister will take to make sure that the program is maintained and enlarged so as to take into account the preferences of Montreal residents.