

forthwith against expenditures, rather than fudging the figures and appearing to have an asset when in fact there is none.

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, it seems to me we have an asset: we have the land which was accumulated for the purpose of building Pickering airport. Of course, it was a decision of the Government of Canada actually to stop the construction. The bulldozers were already on site when this decision was taken. Of course, it was taken as a result of the decision by the province of Ontario that it would not build the connecting roads, the services or in any way co-operate with the existence of an airport at that site. So it may have been a cabinet decision but it was made without very much choice, in the circumstances.

We might have had a choice at an earlier date when we were trying to select sites and when, having looked at some sites very carefully, we were asked by Ontario to put aside our site selection and even our choices—one, two, three, four—and go to a completely different site, namely, the Pickering site. The airport was being constructed there very much for provincial reasons—their view of development. It is worth commenting on this extraordinary matter. We went to a site which was the choice of the province, and when we were ready to move with airport construction we were stopped from going ahead by the message from the province that it would not co-operate in an airport at that site.

**Mr. Stevens:** Mr. Speaker, presumably the Minister of Transport does not understand the figures respecting the Pickering site. The total capitalization for Pickering is \$158 million. The Auditor General did not quibble with the land costs. He stated that the development costs were wrongly capitalized in view of the fact that by decision of the cabinet it was agreed that it would be postponed.

Will the minister assure the House that in future no further development costs at Pickering will be capitalized but will be shown as a current expense, as previous development costs should have been charged?

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my first answer, obviously we will take seriously the recommendations of the Auditor General. Simply, I was pointing out to the hon. member, who made it sound as though something very extraordinary had happened, that it might not have looked so extraordinary at all if we had gone ahead with the airport development.

**Mr. Stevens:** Well, it is extraordinary.

**Mr. Lang:** For that reason, we were treating costs in a certain way. Obviously, we must reach our conclusion about what we are going to do with the land, the whole question of development there and, as a result, where the costs ought to be best shown.

### Oral Questions

## CONSUMER AFFAIRS

### MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON BEEF IMPORT QUOTAS

**Mr. Bert Hargrave (Medicine Hat):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs: it arises out of last week's beef industry seminar in Regina at which the minister was a luncheon speaker.

In view of the minister's somewhat abrupt and abrasive remarks which clearly indicated his preference for higher beef import quotas and both floor and ceiling prices for live cattle, will he indicate if he was enunciating government policy in this part of his speech to the beef industry seminar?

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I reject the suggestion that I was abrupt and harsh with the cattlemen. They invited me to speak to them as the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, and that is what I did. I do not know what else they would expect me to do but speak as a minister for consumers.

**An hon. Member:** They expected you to use common sense.

**Mr. Allmand:** I did. I suggested that we should get together—the government, cattlemen and consumer groups—to work out, at the beginning of the beef cycle, a system which would provide good incomes to beef producers as well as to provide stable prices for consumers. I thought the beginning of the beef cycle was a good time to do this.

Also, I suggested that perhaps we could increase the quota for low grades of beef which supply the hamburger market. This is important for low income Canadians and it does not compete with what Canadian producers produce, which is high quality beef. I suggested this as a topic for discussion. I hope we can carry through with those discussions. But the increase in quotas is not yet government policy.

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## AGRICULTURE

### REQUEST THAT BEEF IMPORT QUOTAS WILL NOT BE INCREASED

**Mr. Bert Hargrave (Medicine Hat):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture.

**Mr. McGrath:** This is going to be good.

**Mr. Hargrave:** The well-researched cattle and beef projections given at the Regina beef seminar pointed out that continued heavy kills of cows and heifers in both Canada and the United States will result in critical shortages throughout the last half of 1979, all of 1980 and through to 1982. That is plainly evident now.

Would the Minister of Agriculture give Canadian beef cattle producers some reassurance that beef import quotas will not be increased and that no floor and ceiling live cattle prices are to be brought in?