

Canada Agricultural Products Standards Act to control bulk shipments of fruit and vegetables to Canada on consignment from the U.S. from its massive surplus stocks. The Minister failed to act and the entire cherry crop, for example, was left to rot because there was no market.

Can the Minister say why he broke his promise and why the legislation was not brought in to protect these producers?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, this matter is still under consideration before Cabinet and I hope it will be possible to give details as soon as possible.

REQUEST THAT AMENDING LEGISLATION BE ENACTED

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, the Minister is in danger of becoming the Rip van Winkle of the Government. He has been asleep at the switch for over a year on this thing. Entire crops are being lost.

Can he assure these producers that this is not being held up by the free trade deal with the U.S. and that the proper legislation will be put in place to save the crop this year from unfair competition from the U.S.?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, no Government has ever taken the interests of Canadian farmers as seriously as we have. Government expenditures in the agricultural sector have increased more than 400 per cent. As far as the free trade agreement is concerned, the industry stands to benefit very substantially. We will develop markets in the United States that we did not have before. The lowering of tariff barriers between our two countries will benefit many regions in Canada in the fresh fruits and vegetables sector. I hardly think anyone in the Liberal Party would object to expanding markets for Canadian market gardeners, Mr. Speaker!

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● (1500)

[English]

AIRPORTS

SECURITY MEASURES—SITUATION AT LONDON AIRPORT

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. Several of my constituents have expressed concern with regard to airport security. No doubt the recent escapades of the armed flying bandit in Ontario skies has heightened their concerns. My constituents and I would like to know how this armed flying bandit can use Transport Canada's airports as a means of a getaway for his guns and stolen money. People want to know why baggage, both checked and unchecked, is not looked after properly.

Privilege—Mr. Manly

The Government has talked about safety as being a primary concern. What steps are being taking to ensure some safety and security at Canada's airports, particularly the London airport?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my predecessor put over \$63 million into security controls at our airports.

In London as in any other airport in Canada we are increasing the security system all the time. I will be meeting this afternoon with Canadian Airlines, Air Canada, and Wardair to see how we can again improve the system. It is the policy of this Government to make improvements to the system, and I believe we can say that we have one of the best systems in the world.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Humboldt—Lake Centre, just a single question, and that will end Question Period.

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NATIONAL REVENUE

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY EVALUATION

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, in olden times tax assessors used extortion to extract the maximum tax from their victims rather than following a strict tax schedule and regime.

Revenue Canada seems to be reverting to that long dead practice with regard to machinery evaluation and the amount of tax owing. Can the Minister tell us why?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, my colleague knows that our Department is trying, and is, I am sure, administering this program in a very objective way. I have met with many colleagues and farm organizations. We cancelled the special audit over a year ago.

There is an obligation that our Department has to administer tax programs. We are trying to do this very sensitively and we are giving extra attention to farmers who feel they have a grievance.

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PRIVILEGE

UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA—OBJECTION TO DESCRIPTION

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I rise with respect to Citations 48 to 51 of Beauchesne's Fifth Edition which come under the heading "Reflections on Members".