

unfortunate situations as palatable as possible in terms of rendering our services quickly.

Mr. Lawrence: The information I had as late as last night was that a number have still been unable to get their reporting cards from the UIC, as a result of which their claims have not been processed; and, of course, this penalized them because they were not able to get supplementary unemployment benefits from their own union. Do I understand, now, that the minister is assuring the House that by far the great majority of them will at least have their reporting cards by the end of this week?

Mr. Andras: That is the information I have, Mr. Speaker. I might inject one caveat. Not all the claimants did register at that time on January 10, some came afterwards, I presume for reasons of their own. The bulk of the situation is well in hand but, having been reminded by the hon. member, I will put a close follow-up on it.

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FINANCE

REQUEST THAT MINISTER RECONSIDER TAX IMPOSED ON SMALL AIRCRAFT

Mr. Arnold Malone (Battle River): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct this question to the Minister of Finance. I notice that last night I received a letter in my mailbox from him giving notice of a meeting on March 5; he was asking people to check his mandate at that time. I cannot attend then, so I should like to do it now. In view of the recent concern about energy and policies put forth to conserve energy, would the minister reconsider the idea of taxing small aeroplanes, especially in light of the fact that many small aeroplanes get as high a gas mileage as middle-sized automobiles? Certainly his proposal is going to put at least a \$30 million crimp on the aeroplane industry in this country.

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we discussed this matter thoroughly when the excise bill was before the House. There is nothing to add at this stage except invite the hon. member, as I did, to come to this town hall meeting, as a resident of Ottawa-Carleton, together with other members of the House who are residents in the riding, including the hon. member for Edmonton West, and I will try to expand on my answer at that time.

Mr. Malone: Mr. Speaker, anyone who looks at a map of Canada will realize that this is not a country in which use of the aeroplane should be restricted. In light of the fact that small aeroplanes use only .03 per cent of all the fuel used for transportation, would the minister table the data which led him to the conclusion there would be any significant saving in fuel? The calculation shows that in seven years you would only save five days of fuel if you stopped all small aeroplane traffic.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing I can add to what was said during the three days of debate here.

Oral Questions

AGRICULTURE

IMPORTATION OF POTATOES FROM UNITED STATES—GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Agriculture if he could explain the rationale which allowed his department, I believe, to permit the import of ten million pounds of potatoes from Maine for processing, in light of the fact that maritime potato growers are still selling their produce at well below the cost of production.

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether the hon. member is referring to potatoes which were imported into Canada last year. If he is, these potatoes come in under our laws. At the same time we are exporting potatoes in processed form into the United States from the province of Alberta, so it is a movement of trade which has been customary in North America. It has always been so. If the hon. member is referring to something which happened just recently, I should like to have the information.

Mr. MacLean: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that this permit was granted very recently. I would ask the minister this question as a supplementary. Considering the general market price of potatoes at the present time, would he look into the possibility that these imported potatoes coming on to the market in this country are being dumped, in the technical sense?

Mr. Whelan: Yes, we are constantly checking this; but actually there is no permit granted. Anyone can import potatoes as long as they meet tariff restrictions and grading standards. We have no permit system for importing potatoes, as there is in the United States when we are shipping our seed potatoes, etc., which is a very big market for us.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

BENEFIT TO TREASURY OF EACH ONE-POINT RISE IN COST OF LIVING INDEX

Mr. Ron Huntington (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Treasury Board. Has the hon. gentleman prepared statistics to show the benefit or gain to the treasury for each one-point rise in the cost of living index?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, we do not keep such statistics. The question should rather be directed to the Minister of Finance, who charts the economic policy of the government.

[English]

Mr. Huntington: In light of that answer, could the hon. gentleman explain the statement of the secretary of the Treasury Board in an address to Canada Assistance Plan officials in which he said that for each one-point increase in the cost of living the federal treasury profited by some \$300 million?