

Oral Questions

had registered the disapproval of the Government of Canada with regard to the general issue. I have just undertaken to raise the specific problem within those parameters and will report to the House and my hon. friend.

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AGRICULTURE

MARKETING OF ALFALFA PELLETS

Mr. Brian White (Dauphin—Swan River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Farmers Alfalfa Products Limited of Dauphin, Manitoba, a farmers' co-operative that has taken over management of the alfalfa processing plant, has applied for an agreement under the Co-operative Marketing Act to market alfalfa pellets. Can the Minister assure the farmers involved in this new venture that the application is being processed as quickly as possible?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Member's interest and his continuing representation on behalf of the producers in his province. I am sure the Member can take some satisfaction from the fact that the ongoing meetings between the particular association and the appropriate officials in my Department are going well.

There are four fairly straightforward criteria that have to be met. The information I have should not create a problem for the association to meet the criteria, and hopefully we will be in a position to give a positive response in the very near future.

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TRADE

INCREASE IN JAPANESE STEEL IMPORTS

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. The Minister knows that the Government's industrial and energy policy is causing the lay-off of 1,500 people at Algoma Steel in Sault Ste. Marie and threatens to shut down the mining operations at Wawa.

Why has the Government, in view of this difficulty, allowed the Japanese steel producers to increase their exports of steel tubing to Canada by 300 per cent since last August, and to dump 67,000 tonnes of steel onto the Canadian market? When is the Government going to protect the jobs of Canadian steelworkers?

Hon. James Kelleher (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I can advise the Hon. Member that the Government is well aware of that problem—

Mr. Deans: You are aware of everything.

Mr. Kelleher:—and we have taken action.

Mr. Deans: That is better.

Mr. Kelleher: And we are continuing to take action.

Mr. Deans: Did they take their steel back?

Mr. Fulton: What did you do, write a memorandum?

Mr. Kelleher: When Hon. Members are prepared to listen, I am prepared to continue, Mr. Speaker.

We have been meeting on a regular basis with the chief executive officers of the steel industry. Indeed our last meeting was two weeks ago. We just received from them this past Friday an indication of the action they would like us to take. We are presently preparing the necessary recommendations. I will be discussing those with my colleagues and I hope action will be forthcoming very shortly.

FAST TRACK MONITORING SYSTEM

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. Last July I wrote to the Minister and asked him when he would put in place a fast track monitoring system for steel imports so that Canadian steel producers could take action under the anti-dumping provisions of our law.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Foster: When is he going to put that fast track system in place?

Hon. James Kelleher (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I can advise the Hon. Member that is the very thing we are looking at now. We hope to make recommendations in that regard very shortly, which will accomplish what the Hon. Member is requesting.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

CALCULATION OF PENSION AS INCOME—EFFECT ON EARLY RETIREES

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I am sure the Minister is well aware of the great hardship being created for early retirees, particularly ex-Armed Services personnel, in light of the changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act. Will the Minister now accept her responsibility under that Act and rescind that iniquitous change in the Unemployment Insurance Act which came into effect in January, 1986?

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, as I have said to the Hon. Member on a number of occasions and to the House, this change in regulations was first announced in November, 1984.