

Oral Questions

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, my suggestion to the hon. member would be that he take a course in either quick or slow reading. To go back to my letter, I never said what he attributed to me.

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● (1450)

[Translation]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

REQUEST THAT JOURNALISTS AND TECHNICIANS BE GIVEN
SAME ADVANTAGES

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton-Strathcona): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the minister responsible for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. An agreement in principle has been reached between the corporation and its technicians in Montreal. After a three-week long strike, both parties have agreed to a 10 per cent raise over the first year and a 10.5 per cent raise over the second year plus a 3.5 per cent raise resulting from the restructuring of the pay scale, which adds up to raises of 10 and 14 per cent respectively. That is the new national standard for the CBC. Does the minister intend to ask the corporation to offer similar raises to its journalists who have been striking for over seven months? Also, could not this agreement serve as a basis for the settlement of the other current conflicts?

Hon. Francis Fox (Secretary of State and Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is mentioning the fact that the union leaders have agreed to recommend to their members acceptance of the offers the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has made to its technicians and on which they will be called to vote today. Needless to say, Madam Speaker, I would be pleased to convey the hon. member's suggestion to the president of the CBC. I should like to mention, however, that that union has also agreed to an increase in the number of working hours every week.

SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTE BEFORE HOLDING OF ECONOMIC
SUMMIT

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton-Strathcona): Madam Speaker, in view of the fact that the CBC has negotiated and apparently nearly concluded a contract with its technicians in Montreal before doing so with its technicians in Toronto, which is something of a novelty, and in view of the fact that its journalists in Montreal and its technicians on the English network would be happy to receive the same offers before the economic summit, would the minister prevail upon the corporation to negotiate and settle these conflicts before the summit, or would he prefer to let these conflicts deteriorate until September, now that the corporation can use its transcoding

installations in Montreal to broadcast the proceedings of this summit to the world without having to settle with its employees who are still on strike?

Hon. Francis Fox (Secretary of State and Minister of Communications): In view of the way the CBC has been bargaining this week, Madam Speaker, it is clear that it is anxious to get agreements from all its working units as soon as possible. There are some 24 or 25 of these units, and the CBC has already signed agreements with 16 or 17 of them. Which means that it still has to get agreements from 5 or 6 of them, and we hope that the parties will be able to sign new working contracts as soon as possible.

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[English]

AGRICULTURE

HERD MAINTENANCE PROGRAM—DELAY IN PAYMENTS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Final settlement for many beef, dairy and sheep producers under the Herd Maintenance Program is being delayed while the minister in charge of DREE travels in Africa. Producers are frustrated and angry at still having to wait two months after their appeals have come to Ottawa for his attention, and in the meantime prices have continued to go down. They need the money now.

Is the minister impressing upon his colleague, the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, the need to deal quickly with these appeals, and when will the funds be forwarded to the producers who have waited almost a year for them?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, the hon. member said they waited almost a year on the appeals. A lot of these applications were not submitted until after the deadline, which was the end of December, 1980. So the appeals have been here, and a committee of ministers will meet later this afternoon to discuss them further, and hopefully we can come to an early settlement.

COST SHARING OF DROUGHT RELIEF PROGRAMS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, it is interesting to note that the deadline has been extended to December 31. Most of our producers did not know about that one.

In March the province of Saskatchewan announced a continuing program of assistance should drought continue into this season. Does the minister intend to inform Saskatchewan and other provinces as to his intentions regarding cost sharing of such programs, and when is the government going to make an announcement in that regard for 1981?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, we are more optimistic than is the hon. member. We