

Oral Questions

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

REQUEST FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF POULTRY MARKETING AGENCY

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put my question to the Minister of Agriculture. Could he tell the House whether he intends to establish a national poultry marketing board in Canada and, if so, when?

[English]

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Yes, Mr. Speaker, and very soon.

[Translation]

SUBSIDY PAYMENT TO INDUSTRIAL MILK PRODUCERS—
MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): In that case, I am very optimistic, considering the minister's answer. I am going to go to another subject. Can the minister say whether he is considering giving industrial milk producers the 52 cents they are asking for, and if not, why not?

[English]

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, yes.

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HEALTH AND WELFARE

HEALTH CARE OF NATIVE PEOPLES

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the right hon. Prime Minister. Can the Prime Minister say whether he has received a communication from representatives of the Indian people in the prairie provinces asking him to remove or replace the Minister of National Health and Welfare because of her unsatisfactory handling of the Indian health services? If he has considered this good advice, when can we expect him to take some action on it?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I received such a communication but I do not agree with the hon. member that it is good advice.

MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MARITIME INDIAN CHIEFS

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry the Minister of National Health and Welfare is not in the House, so I will direct my supplementary question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

In view of the fact he apparently wants to keep the minister on the job, will he ask her to live up to the commitments she made in the House last Monday and Friday that she would meet with the maritime chiefs in the maritimes?

An hon. Member: Here she comes.

[Mr. Speaker.]

Mr. Yewchuk: Today, she sent a telex suggesting that she wants them to come back to Ottawa to meet with her. In view of the charges made by the president of the Alberta Indian Association, that the new health policy she enunciated for Indians will result in unnecessary deaths among Indian people, will the minister give a commitment to review this policy to prevent these unnecessary deaths?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Prime Minister—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Miss Bégin: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry. If I appear to be emotional about that question, it is because I am deeply shocked—and I mean every word I am using this morning—at the accusation of the hon. member that the guidelines regarding eyeglasses, dental expenditures and transportation costs will cause the death of anybody in the country. I do not accept that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Miss Bégin: I should like the hon. member to withdraw what he said, because it is an accusation unacceptable to any Canadian.

● (1132)

An hon. Member: That's nonsense.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: What a cry baby.

Miss Bégin: I find that shocking and absolutely unacceptable. We are faced with a problem which I think is taking on proportions that are dangerous for those who care about the health of Indians, starting with the Indians themselves living on reserves. They do not know what goes on in this city in a political way, at times at an irresponsible level.

I have received representations from some chiefs. I did not hear from the National Indian Brotherhood with whom I met a few weeks ago, including representatives from every province and territory. I have since received, quite suddenly, representations from chiefs of four groups of provincial federations. I addressed the problem immediately and told the people who suddenly wanted to come to Ottawa, after I had already agreed to meet other groups' representatives in my department, for whom I work, that I would not see them immediately because that was impossible, but I would very soon and I asked if our technical people could meet with them right away.

The CBC had a program which was—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Yewchuk: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious why the minister has imposed this policy, because one of the things she has cut out is ambulance rides to take sick people to hospital. If she does not think that is a threat to their lives, then she is a lost cause in this regard.