

Oral Questions

● (1440)

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE**AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION BOARD—INQUIRY AS TO
POSSIBILITY OF ACCELERATING PAYMENTS TO HOG
PRODUCERS**

Mr. Jean-Guy Dubois (Lotbinière): Madam Speaker, my question was for the Minister of Agriculture, but as he is away from the House, I will direct it to his parliamentary secretary. We are aware that last summer, through its Agricultural Stabilization Board, the Department of Agriculture provided assistance to qualified hog breeders and feeders. A great many of them, however, are complaining that payments are being made slowly. I should like therefore to ask the parliamentary secretary if the board has received many applications, how many cheques have already been sent out to the two categories of producers, and if these payments could be accelerated.

Mr. Marcel Ostiguy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I am grateful to the hon. member for his question. Indeed, the two programs which have been implemented by the Department of Agriculture will require expenditures of \$46.5 million and \$6.5 million for hogs and piglets respectively. As far as hogs are concerned, 25,487 applications have been received and 5,998 cheques have been issued. The remaining cheques should be issued before the end of 1980. As far as piglets are concerned, 3,900 applications have been received and the cheques should be sent out within the next two weeks.

* * *

[English]

SECOND WORLD WAR**KATYN FOREST MASSACRE—REPRESENTATION AT UNVEILING
OF MEMORIAL**

Hon. Michael Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. On September 14 this year there was an unveiling of a memorial to the 15,000 Polish officers who lost their lives in 1940 as a result of an execution near the town of Katyn in Poland. At that commemoration there were representatives from the official opposition, representatives from the government of Ontario and the opposition of the government of Ontario, as well as a number of municipal politicians. The federal government had intended to send a representative but at the last minute the plans were changed.

My question to the minister is: on what basis did the government change its mind and decide not to have representation at this very important event; and was external pressure applied to the government which caused it to change its mind?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, I believe there was representation

by several governments, but that had no influence on the attitude of the government because our long-standing policy has been not to participate in any activities relating to the Katyn forest massacre. I think the fact that the people of Poland at that time were undergoing such traumatic events should alone be sufficient reason to justify that position.

Mr. Wilson: Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question. If the government has had this long-standing policy, why did it decide to send a representative to the memorial commemoration, the hon. member for Parkdale-High Park? Why did it change its mind at the last minute, and what governments were pressuring the Government of Canada not to send a representative to that event?

Mr. MacGuigan: Madam Speaker, it is my understanding that it was the governments of Poland and the Soviet Union which made representations to us, but I repeat that that had no influence whatever on the long-standing policy of this government, which was established long before such representations were received. Members of Parliament, of course, are free to attend such events on their own behalf and a number of members from this side of the House did so.

* * *

THE CONSTITUTION**STATEMENTS BY PREMIER OF NEWFOUNDLAND RESPECTING
FEDERAL PROPOSALS**

Mr. George Baker (Gander-Twillingate): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Last night the Premier of Newfoundland made some extreme statements, claiming that measures proposed by this government could result in Newfoundland losing control over Labrador and its right to a denominational system of education. Could the Prime Minister assure the House that such is not the case?

An hon. Member: Isn't it in the Supreme Court?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, members of the opposition are asking about the Supreme Court. I would point out that the statements are clearly untrue, based not on an interpretation of the courts but on what our resolution itself says. When there are other methods of amending the constitution, we do not propose to use the amending provision; we propose to use the one which is preserved in our resolution by section 53 and item 4 of the schedule. In other words, we cannot change the boundaries of a province without the consent of that province.

An hon. Member: A referendum?

Mr. Trudeau: That is stated clearly in our resolution, if only Premier Peckford took the time to read it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: The hon. member for Joliette.

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: Pardon. The Right Hon. Prime Minister had not finished with his answer, I am sorry. I will give him the floor.

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, the opposition often asks questions in two parts so I do not see why they would object to a question in two parts by a member on this side.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: On this question of denominational schools, Mr. Peckford again failed to read the resolution. When we talk of freedom of religion, we are not following the type of protection given in the United States which forbids the establishment of religions. Therefore, far from abolishing the right of denominational schools to continue to exist, our proposed resolution, on the contrary, guarantees the existence of that freedom of religion. It is also guaranteed by section 93 of the British North America Act which is continued by the present resolution. So again, on this item Premier Peckford is completely off base.

* * *

[Translation]

AIRPORTS

MIRABEL INTERNATIONAL—IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Madam Speaker, in view of the absence of the Minister of Transport and the importance of my question, I shall put it to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. Last Thursday the Secretary of State, addressing the Mirabel Cargo Association, recalled that during the election campaign the Liberal party had promised to proceed with phase two of Mirabel, which was part of the original project, adding, and I quote:

—in fact, there is absolutely no question at this time of proceeding with phase 2 of Mirabel as provided for in the original plan and entailing the construction of a second airport and another landing strip.

Can the Prime Minister tell us today whether the Secretary of State and Minister of Communications was then speaking on behalf of the government and whether he, the Prime Minister, was advised of that decision?

Mr. Robert Bockstael (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Transport, I must say the question is still under study; it would be unwise to announce a decision at this time. When the impact of the over-all situation at Mirabel and Dorval has been looked into, the minister, in agreement with cabinet, will be in a position to announce the decision to the House.

Mr. La Salle: Madam Speaker, in view of the reply of the parliamentary secretary, it seems clear that the Minister of Communications made an unfounded statement in affirming that going ahead with phase 2 had been definitely decided

Oral Questions

against; under those circumstances, can the parliamentary secretary assure us that a study is being made on the possibility of achieving the original objective which, according to the statement of the Minister of Communications, has been definitely cancelled?

Mr. Bockstael: Madam Speaker, there is still an element of uncertainty due to deep changes in our economy and the use of the two services, especially that of the Mirabel airport. The matter is still under review and the Minister of Transport will have an announcement to make at a later date.

* * *

● (1450)

[English]

INDUSTRY

MASSEY-FERGUSON—PROPOSAL TO REFINANCE

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. I wonder if the minister might share with us the nature of the proposal which was put before this government and the government of Ontario with regard to the recapitalization and reorganization of Massey-Ferguson which justified the government taking this most unusual position of guaranteeing the new equity investment of those who might put their money into Massey-Ferguson without similarly guaranteeing the jobs of the people who work there.

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Madam Speaker, my hon. friend missed a very important part of what I had to say in making my announcement on behalf of the federal government yesterday. At that time I said that among the very important conditions attached to the willingness of the Government of Canada and the government of Ontario to guarantee a portion of the equity refinancing of Massey-Ferguson would be conditions involving the preservation of jobs and the carrying out of further research and development, production and investment by Massey-Ferguson in Canada. These will be conditions very much attached to what we intend to do in facilitating the refinancing of Massey-Ferguson.

Mr. Deans: In order that we can better understand what it is that the minister proposes to do and the nature of the guarantees that he is going to extract, is the minister prepared to stand in this House and explain to us and the people of Canada exactly what form the guarantees will take which will assure us that the equity investment guarantee will in fact mean for Canadians that there will be jobs, that there will be a reorganized company and that there will in fact be a profit-making operation from which we can derive benefit? If he can, will he explain why the government, if it feels this is a good thing to do, did not take an equity position and gain for Canada at least some return?