

Inquiries of the Ministry

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Perhaps the Minister of Transport wants to answer this question.

Mr. Diefenbaker: No; I asked the Prime Minister, who told us how he was going to save this nation from inflation. Now he cannot answer the question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the Canadian Transport Commission will be doing with regard to this application, if such be the case. However, I will make sure that the Prices and Incomes Commission considers these facts as they have been stated.

Mr. Diefenbaker: As the increase of live-stock rates—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Has the right hon. gentleman a supplementary question?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Yes, Mr. Speaker. As these increases will be taking effect as of the first day of March, which is two days away, will the Prime Minister personally have the matter looked into, or does this mean the end of all those roseate promises in regard to inflation that he made on February 18?

Mr. Trudeau: If the right hon. gentleman has been following the evolution of this situation, he will have seen that there has never been any statement made that prices or charges will be frozen absolutely, but rather that there will be voluntary restraint. I also said that if restraint did not come about voluntarily, then governments at all levels would consider other measures. No decision was made at any level, at least that I know of, that before increases took place governments should intervene. What we said was that if increases were made that were not justified, then we would intervene.

Mr. Diefenbaker: One further supplementary question. Since this will be the second increase in freight rates on meat and live-stock within one year, does the Prime Minister consider that the railway corporation owned by the people of Canada is exercising a reasonable and responsible sense of restraint, something to which he gave such voluble and vocal support?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

GRAIN**WHEAT—ACREAGE REDUCTION PAYMENTS—
LONG-RANGE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS—
IMPROVEMENT OF SALES**

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister without Portfolio who is in charge of the Wheat Board.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Has he returned from the television cameras?

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I can understand the minister leaving the chamber to get on television, though if he were like the Prime Minister he would have so much free time that he would not need to leave the House for that purpose. May I ask the minister, arising out of the statement he has made today, whether the provisions relating to these acreage reduction payments will be brought down in the form of legislation, and whether they will apply to this crop year only or is this to be a continuing program until further notice?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister without Portfolio): Mr. Speaker, the form of the acreage payment will be made apparent in short order. The program is, of course, one that is specifically designed to meet a surplus production of 22 million acres, or approximately 500 million bushels of wheat, and is tailored to that end. Therefore, given full compliance with and the fullest participation in the program on the part of the farmers, the program is for one year only.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A supplementary question. The minister did not answer the first part of my question. Will these payments be made in accordance with legislation passed by this House, or does the minister plan some other method of making these payments? Will a bill be brought down to provide for these acreage payments?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the intention is that the amount required for these payments will appear in the supplementary estimates and will be before the House in that form.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell the House on what basis he arrived at the figure of \$6 an acre for summerfallow and \$10 an acre for perennial forage crops? Is this based on the cost of performing the work, or what?