

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

two or three other departments, the Department of Trade and Commerce, Finance and National Revenue. Those are likely to be the departments represented.

**Mr. Hamilton:** A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the subject matter dealing specifically with wheat, or general trade?

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the mission will be to sell wheat to China.

REPORTED NEGOTIATIONS RESPECTING QUOTAS  
ON EXPORTS TO CANADA

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Reid Scott (Danforth):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. In view of published reports that government negotiations have been initiated to persuade Portugal, Israel, Hong Kong and Formosa to accept quotas on certain of their exports to Canada, and in view of the widespread interest of the business community in the implications of such negotiations, can the minister advise the house whether these negotiations are continuing and, if so, can he give the house an up to date report on such discussions and negotiations?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Trade and Commerce):** Mr. Speaker, I can confirm to the hon. member that discussions on this question are under way, but I am sorry I am not in a position to give any further information at the present time.

**Mr. Scott:** As a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, could the minister indicate when he might be able to give us an up to date report on these negotiations?

**Mr. Sharp:** I certainly could not give an up to date report until the discussions are completed.

## HEALTH AND WELFARE

MEASURES TO COUNTERACT RADIOACTIVE  
FALL-OUT

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Reid Scott (Danforth):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the widespread anxiety created by published statements that the greater part of the radioactive debris from the December, 1962 Russian atomic tests, including strontium 90, cesium 137 and carbon 14, is now starting to drift down over Canada, and in view of the fact that such published reports indicate that such debris will settle more heavily on Canada than on any other country in the world, can the minister outline to the house

[Mr. Sharp.]

the steps being taken by the government to protect Canadian livestock and food supplies from the dangers of contamination with its resultant danger to the health of the Canadian people?

**Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to thank the hon. member for giving me notice of his question this morning. While I feel that the steps the government is taking to protect Canadian livestock and food supplies are not properly matters which should be given on orders of the day—and if my hon. friend wishes I shall be pleased to answer a question on the order paper—the matter is of such concern to many Canadians that I should like to comment at least in this way. We are testing air, precipitation, soil, milk, wheat and human tissue. We are bringing samples to Ottawa and having these tested, and we will continue to do so in an intensified way.

However, it is not correct to say that at the moment there are significant quantities of cesium 137. If there is no further atmospheric testing the level is one which, while we are watching it, is not of great concern; that is, it is not dangerous. The levels of strontium 90 and cesium 137 result from the heavy atomic testing of last fall. At the moment it is considered by the department that the levels reached will not be high enough to warrant government intervention, but a very close watch is being kept on this and a plan is prepared for use if necessary.

I should like to assure the hon. member and all hon. members of the house, and through them the country, that the closest attention is being paid to this particular problem.

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister tell the house at how many points these samples are taken across Canada?

**Miss LaMarsh:** I do not have this information available, Mr. Speaker, but may I suggest to the leader of the New Democratic party that if he is prepared to put the question on the order paper I shall see that the answer is given.

**Mr. Colin Cameron (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare arising out of her answer to my colleague from Danforth. Has her department undertaken any research to establish the threshold of danger with regard to the radioactive substances referred to by my colleague and the hon. lady herself or, if not, on what basis does her