

Oral Questions

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the Wheat Pool did focus on the very specific aspect of the Wheat Board remaining the selling agent for the rest of the country, and in effect proposed that the kind of system we adopted this year for formula pricing be continued for another year into the future, along with some of the other steps we have proposed. The right hon. gentleman's reference to floor prices is, of course, a direct reference to a part of what is in our policy in terms of minimum price guarantees. They also endorse the storage program which is a part of our policy. That is why I say there is certainly a distinct hope that we can in this further period discuss the advantages of our proposal, which would have left the board very much in control of the export market and most of the domestic market but would have allowed a market pricing technique to operate, as against the advantages there are with a more artificial technique. I am certainly openminded on the question, as always.

● (1150)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: There is no doubt the minister is openminded, but the fact remains that what has been stated by the Wheat Pool supporting the policy of the government is not. Is it not true, that it is unacceptable?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I must ask for an answer, not an equivocation and alibi. Is it not a fact that the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool says it will not accept the government's plan?

Mr. Lang: The fact is that it has indicated its acceptance of the principles which are obviously fundamental to what we are accomplishing. They indicated one variation on the manner of accomplishing what we wanted, but the most important thing is that they have accepted the principle of one country and one grain market throughout that country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair recognizes the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby.

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INDUSTRY

SURVEY OF COMPANIES ON CONSEQUENCES OF POSSIBLE SHORTFALL IN ENERGY SUPPLY—INCLUSION OF AUTOMOBILE FIRMS—EFFECT ON MODELS PRODUCED

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance concerning the survey done last week of 1,000 companies on the consequences of a shortfall in energy supply. Could the minister inform the House in a general way what questions were put to the companies and, second, when the departmental committee expects to finish its analysis of the results of that survey?

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might be allowed to answer the question. This survey was undertaken by my department. It is part of the contingency planning in respect of the announcement the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources made last week concerning the energy supplies allocation board. This survey was aimed at determining the possible effects on various industries in various parts of the country of shortages of various fuels—diesel fuel, heating oil, and heavy fuel oils—from the point of view of contingency planning. We are doing our homework, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, would the minister tell the House when he expects the committee will complete its analysis of the results of the survey? I understand the survey is completed. When will the analysis be completed, and will he assure the House he will make the results of that analysis and any subsequent action the government intends to take known to the public?

Mr. Gillespie: This is a continuing analysis, Mr. Speaker.

An hon. Member: Continue your homework.

Mr. Gillespie: If you would like to wait for the answer, I will give it to you. I know some hon. members opposite regard this as a serious question.

Mr. Hees: Treat it seriously and stop joking about your homework.

Mr. Gillespie: Perhaps some of them will realize why it is necessary to set up an energy supplies allocation board. Perhaps, then, they will understand that when it is necessary to go that far it is also necessary to get some facts upon which allocations will be made.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I have a final supplementary for the minister. Can the minister inform the House whether or not the automotive industry was included in this survey and, more specifically, whether his department is finding out what models of cars in terms of size are being produced in Canada since 60 per cent of that production goes to the United States and there could be a fall-off in employment if their sales go down considerably? Was an effort made to determine what kind of models are being produced and what the consequences might be in that industry in light of the energy shortage?

Mr. Gillespie: We have been in touch with the manufacturing companies and their presidents within the last 24 hours in respect of precisely that kind of question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for South Shore.