

ing, would the minister consider appointing a special commissioner, someone outside the commission, to look into these problems and to make a recommendation in this regard as quickly as possible?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has been very concerned over the last year about this problem and has made many constructive suggestions in writing, all of which have been taken into consideration. An in-depth study of the whole administration is proceeding at the same time as we are formulating the legislation, and I think we should see some basic changes in the administration introduced at the same time as we introduce the legislation.

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GRAIN

RAPESEED—PERIOD UNDER DELIVERY QUOTAS—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF REGULATIONS

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board arising out of the confusion in reference to rapeseed. Would the minister advise the House how long rapeseed has been placed on a quota basis under the Canadian Wheat Board, and is he prepared to table a copy of the regulations that introduced quotas for this production?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the Wheat Board has been operating quotas for rapeseed for some time in connection with over-all responsibility to see to it that handling facilities are equitably available for the various grains. I do not have at hand the specific dates but I would be glad to find them and furnish them to the hon. member.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, there are hundreds of producers who seem to have had their permit books seized by officers because of a misunderstanding. First of all, they had long-term contracts, and then they came under quotas and neither the elevator agents nor the producers knew about it. Are these people in fact going to be charged under the law with an offence?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to look into the individual cases to which the hon. member has made reference if he will give me the information. There has been no sudden or recent change in the quota requirements, although there may well have been some misunderstanding on the part of some people. I will certainly be glad to investigate this.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, since the minister is going to look into this matter, and as he has not told us yet when rapeseed was put on quota, will he look into the situation of those producers who had long-term contracts and who have been frustrated completely by a silent, quiet Order in Council?

[Later:]

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. This is the second time recently that I have

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asked a question which I believe to be in order and the minister has not been allowed to answer. This is a very serious question affecting thousands of people in western Canada and their livelihood. The minister wanted to answer the question and he was getting to his feet but you cut him off.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I appreciate the point. Perhaps the minister should have been allowed to reply. I will give him the floor at this time.

Mr. Lang: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Rapeseed quotas have been in effect for quite some time.

Mr. Woolliams: How long?

Mr. Lang: It depends on what the hon. member is talking about, Mr. Speaker. Rapeseed quotas for crushing mills have existed this year. Rapeseed quotas for producers have existed for several years. There has been no recent change and, of course, the quota system cannot be over-ridden by individual contracts entered into by individual producers. I very much wanted to answer, Mr. Speaker, but I am sure that most farmers know the answer and so I was not so concerned if the question was unanswered.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the minister is this. If what he says, and I am not arguing with him because he has knowledge of his department, is correct, why were thousands of producers in western Canada permitted to enter into contracts, apart from any quota system, under which they sold their rapeseed and other commodities without any interference from the minister or the department?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, I should have thought that the hon. member, who knows a good deal more about law than he does about grain, would know that contracts between individuals are not only basically within provincial jurisdiction but are something that it is very difficult to do anything about in advance of the fact.

FAILURE OF INTERNATIONAL WHEAT CONFERENCE TO REACH AGREEMENT ON PRICES—ADVICE TO FARMERS PRIOR TO PLANTING

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. Since no agreement on grain prices has been reached at the United Nations wheat conference at Geneva, will the minister indicate what advice he will be giving to farmers with regard to growing wheat in the coming year since the time for planting is approaching?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we anticipate still that it may be possible to give a package of information to producers prior to March 1, including information which may help them in their final planting decisions. Of course, on the subject of the grains arrangement itself, as I indicated earlier there has been a significant degree of co-operation concerning prices as well as some order in respect of pricing even without an effective minimum under the grains arrangement. Therefore nothing very much has changed as a result of the events in Geneva.