

## Oral Questions

## GRAIN

## WHEAT—ALLEGED RESALE BY RUSSIA AT MORE THAN PRICES PAID CANADA AND UNITED STATES

[Later:]

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, my question arises from an answer given by the Minister of Justice to the hon. member for Portneuf. Generally it is agreed that the U.S.S.R., because it was able to purchase wheat at a price not higher than the cost of production from Canada and the United States, has been disposing of wheat at a price much higher than the price it paid. The minister brushed the question aside and said that no doubt the wheat involved was American wheat. That was the answer as I understood it. I ask him, first, what basis he has for his suggestion that the wheat sold was American wheat rather than Canadian wheat?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice):** I am sure the right hon. gentleman will see what my answer really was when he is able to read it in *Hansard*. I indicated at the beginning of my answer that I had no firm indication, only rumours, which the right hon. gentleman ordinarily operates on, that any sales had taken place. I am glad the right hon. gentleman has at last recognized that the United States sold more wheat at lower prices than Canada ever did.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** When it comes to recognition of imagination as a basis for answers, I take second place to the hon. gentleman.

**Mr. Trudeau:** He was talking about questions, not answers.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** No, I come in third place, with the Prime Minister as number two.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** This is not a rumour. It is a fact that sales of wheat purchased below the cost of production under long-term agreements have been made by the U.S.S.R. The minister says it is only rumour. I ask him whether he has been in touch with the U.S.S.R. to ascertain what sales, if any, were made of Canadian wheat. Has the hon. gentleman made inquiries through the embassy in Moscow? Has he requested the embassy to communicate with the grain group in the U.S.S.R. in this regard? Brushing aside answers important to the western farmer will not get by me.

**Mr. Lang:** I am sure the Canadian Wheat Board, alert as ever to any possible problem which might arise for the Canadian farmer, is fully in touch to its own satisfaction with each of its customers. Of course, some of the wheat which has been sold to the U.S.S.R. for a number of years has always been intended for alternative destinations, for example, the extremely valued flour business with Cuba.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** That is another of those smart-aleck answers.

**Some hon. Members:** Order!

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Chair will recognize the right hon. member for a further supplementary, but I would draw the attention of the House to the fact that there is not much more than five minutes left before we call orders of the day.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Usually, the minister takes over the Wheat Board when it is to his advantage to do so. I ask him whether he has been in touch with the board to ascertain whether or not it has made any investigation into this allegation, which is more than fiction—it is fact.

**Mr. Lang:** I am not sure I understand the nature of the right hon. gentleman's concern. I have not discussed this matter with the Wheat Board because, as I have just said, I have no knowledge of anything but rumour and I am completely confident that the Canadian Wheat Board knows enough to bring any such problem to my attention if it considers any action is needed.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Only alibis!

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## THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

## GOVERNMENT POSITION ON IMPOSITION OF PRICE AND WAGE CONTROLS

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister, bearing in mind he did not answer the question directed to him by my hon. friend from St. John's East. In June the Minister of Labour promised his constituents by news letter that if the Food Prices Review Board failed in its efforts to control prices the government had a contingency plan establishing a form of wage and price controls. In light of that promise and in light of unabated rising prices which have reached crisis proportions, will the government now introduce and establish a form of wage and price controls as promised by the Minister of Labour?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** No, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Alexander:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am sure the Prime Minister is most anxious either to contradict the Minister of Labour or to put the House straight. I noticed he was on the point of answering the question. I am sure he would like to put the position before the House.

**An hon. Member:** He said no.

## INCREASED INTEREST RATES—EFFECT ON COST OF TELEPHONE SERVICE AND ELECTRICITY

**Hon. Paul Hellyer (Trinity):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Prime Minister. Has the government undertaken studies to determine the effect of higher interest rates on the cost of future telephone service to Canadians and if so, would he be prepared to make the results of those studies available to the House?