

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Woolliams: I knew my sins would catch up with me. I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce in reference to the Japanese wheat market.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): You should direct it to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Mr. Woolliams: I understand that Japan has refused to honour commitments to accept Canadian wheat because of its damp quality this year. Has the minister anything to report in that regard?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the situation is not exactly as the hon. member has defined it. I checked this morning with the Canadian Wheat Board and the Board of Grain Commissioners, and I have been advised that no complaint has been received from the Japanese food agency in respect of the quality of Canadian wheat arriving in Japan. However, due to difficulties the Japanese have experienced with the quality of new crop wheat from the United States, they have requested a meeting with Canadian officials to discuss the quality of the lower grades of wheat from the 1968 crop.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, I take it from what the minister has said that we have now lost this market for grain under Japanese commitments?

Mr. Pepin: That is a wrong conclusion.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, how many bushels of wheat is the minister able to assure us and the country we will be able to export at this time under Japanese commitments?

Mr. Pepin: There has been no official complaint on the part of Japan in respect of Canadian wheat exports. Because of difficulties Japan has experienced with United States wheat exports they want to check with us as to the quality of our present wheat crop. This is a normal inquiry.

Mr. Woolliams: Are they looking for a superior or an inferior quality?

Mr. Pepin: I understand that Japan usually buys a superior quality, especially No. 2 northern, and I understand no difficulties have arisen up until now. If difficulties do arise I will duly report them to the house and to the hon. member.

[Mr. Woolliams.]

[Later:]

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In view of the reports of the reaction in Japan following receipt there of unsuitable grain, may I ask what steps are being taken to correct this situation. Why did our inspection services not intercept grain that was in poor condition before that grain was shipped?

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, it seems very difficult to be heard this morning. I said specifically that this was United States grain and not Canadian grain. The meeting to be held early next week between the Board of Grain Commissioners and the wheat board and Japanese authorities will be in anticipation of possible problems. It is a precautionary measure. It is not a meeting to correct a damage which has taken place in recent weeks.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. My question has reference to wheat, just as another matter I raised yesterday had reference to the C.B.C. Would the minister make sure that the facts broadcast by our national news service are accurate, so that misunderstandings such as we have here do not develop again.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has made his representation, and I assume it has been noted.

HARBOURS**ROBERTS BANK—AGREEMENT RESPECTING ACCESS AND EGRESS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Transport whether an agreement has been reached between the government of Canada and the government of British Columbia to provide federal access and egress for the construction of buildings on provincial foreshore property adjacent to Roberts Bank. If so, can the minister tell the house what is the nature of this agreement?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, is the hon. member referring to access across the foreshore to the port facility itself? If that is the nature of his question I should like to say that we have an arrangement with the provincial government providing for access during the construction period. This will be followed by negotiations for a