

ing the minister proposed, first, raising the minimum retirement age of public service employees from 55 to 60 years of age and, second, the capping of indexed pensions for those in the public service. Did the minister make these proposals and, if so, had he previously consulted the staff associations representing public servants?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board): Those proposals were not made at the conference on Thursday and Friday.

An hon. Member: Where were they made?

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GRAIN

QUOTAS ON TOUGH WHEAT—GOVERNMENT INTENTIONS

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. It has to do with the snow and rain conditions last fall in the prairies, the result of which is that we have a great deal of damp and tough wheat. I should like to know whether there are any points in the west where tough wheat is on quota, because in northern Saskatchewan last week in particular the situation was serious in that there is no quota on that type of wheat and there is no purchasing by the elevator companies.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the Wheat Board has opened certain quotas on tough and damp wheat. The Wheat Board has to do this very carefully, however, and many farmers are taking the trouble to dry the grain themselves. The Wheat Board made it clear that with the lower grades of wheat, particularly with 3-CU, it would be wise for farmers to consider drying the grain themselves, because delivery opportunities for such grain will not be as great as for higher grades.

Delivery opportunities may open up, but only in the last quarter of the crop year. Of course, this is because the Canadian Wheat Board made very successful efforts in selling the higher grades which they knew were available and could only now, after the harvest, begin to fit the program for selling 3-CU wheat into their other programs. That is the message which the Canadian Wheat Board gave the farmers, and I think this matter is best left in the hands of the Canadian Wheat Board so they can be sure to move the grain which is required for what may be a record year.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am interested to know that there are some areas of the west in which tough wheat is being accepted. But that certainly does not apply to constituencies in Saskatchewan which are represented by other than Liberal members. I ask the minister whether he will do something about this situation. He suggests that farmers themselves should engage in drying operations. Will any assistance to that end be forthcoming from the government of Canada? Furthermore, will he look into this matter again, because it will be a very serious situation a couple of months hence when the break-up

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takes place in the spring: farmers who have damp or tough wheat will suffer terrible losses unless action is taken?

Mr. Lang: We considered, with the advisory committee of the Wheat Board, whether cash advances for drying grain were a desirable thing to invoke. We have put it into permanent legislation so it is there on a standby basis. It was thought the extent of the problem was not such that we should invoke it. Cash advances available for 3-CU come close to the total value of the grain, because they are based on two-thirds of the value of the grain so that farmers, generally speaking, receive adequate cash advances.

I think it is abhorrent for the right hon. gentleman to suggest that quotas might be issued by the Canadian Wheat Board on the basis of representations in parliament by any particular hon. members. I do not know if it reflects how things operated when he was prime minister, but I assure him that in no way and at no time would any political interference take place regarding quotas of the Canadian Wheat Board.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: The minister's annoyance indicates that the truth hurts. I say to him that there was never any interference as there is today through him, and by him, all too often.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

WIRETAPPING OF MORE THAN ONE TELEPHONE—GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice. It concerns the evidence given last week before the Laycraft inquiry about the use of wiretaps. The evidence was that the RCMP felt, when authorization was granted by a judge for wiretapping, they had the right not merely to wiretap the telephone identified in the authorization but also any telephone connected to it. I think that is called spin-off wiretapping. The evidence, also, was that that practice was widespread in western Canada. Can the minister advise whether there was any political authorization for this activity, or whether the RCMP were acting on legal advice in coming to the conclusion that they could use this spin-off wiretap technique following passage of the wiretap law in this House?

● (1442)

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I will determine those two things.

Mr. Leggatt: When the minister is looking into that question, will he also advise us how many of these spin-off wiretaps have taken place since we passed the law; and can he give us a commitment that this practice is not now being used in Canada?