

NATIONAL DEFENCE

COLOUR OF ARMED FORCES UNIFORM

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, my question is unsolicited and probably unwanted. Nevertheless I direct it either to the Minister of National Defence or the associate minister. Could either minister confirm to the house what is now a matter of public record, having appeared in at least one major daily newspaper in Canada, and that is the colour of the uniforms proposed for the new Canadian armed forces?

Mr. Winkler: Answer.

Mr. Forrestall: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, surely this type of information cannot be allowed to continue to be spread throughout the country by the minister at his discretion. If he is out flying balloons or kites, that is one thing; but surely the house is entitled to have an answer to this question.

Mr. Speaker: Unfortunately for the hon. member the rules do not provide that he is entitled to an answer, or an answer that would satisfy him. If the minister chooses not to reply there is nothing more the Chair can do to help the hon. member.

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the story that appeared in the newspapers was strictly speculative.

An hon. Member: The story was quoting you.

Mr. Hellyer: The story did not come from any reliable source that I know about. In any event, when these decisions are taken they will be announced in the usual manner, and I hope I will be able to advise the members of the armed forces before any public announcement is made.

Mr. Forrestall: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hon. minister for answering, but are we to conclude that this is just speculation, as the minister suggests, and has no foundation in fact?

Mr. Hellyer: It is about as pure speculation as can be, Mr. Speaker.

GRAIN

WHEAT—REQUEST FOR HIGHER PRICE IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of

Inquiries of the Ministry

Trade and Commerce. Has the question I asked last Wednesday been brought to the attention of the minister?

Hon. Robert Winters (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, it has. On Wednesday last the hon. member for Qu'Appelle sought information on the international negotiations with respect to the price of wheat. These negotiations are taking place in the GATT cereals group as an important element of the Kennedy round. In these negotiations Canada, together with the other chief exporting countries, including the United States, is seeking a significantly higher price range than that provided under the current international wheat agreement.

Mr. Hamilton: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Do I understand that there are no plans to carry out negotiations at all with the International Wheat Council? Does the minister's answer mean that the long-term international wheat agreement is now defunct?

Mr. Winters: No, I do not believe that assumption would be quite valid. The council representative is in close touch with the negotiations going on at GATT and I think it is fair to say that he has a part to play in the general discussions and negotiations.

THE BUDGET

ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL MEASURES—PROVISION FOR OLD AGE SECURITY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Is the minister reconsidering his previously announced intention to bring in a baby budget, the principal feature of which would be increased taxation for pension purposes?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): No, Mr. Speaker. The intention of the government is to proceed with a small budget before Christmas. Of course I might have to change my mind about that if the house does not make satisfactory progress in other legislation. As the hon. member has said, the principal feature of that budget would be to raise money to pay this very important supplement to old age pensions.

Mr. Knowles: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Because of the amount of money in the old age security fund, is increased taxation for this purpose necessary?