

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

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Friday, February 10, 1956

The house met at eleven o'clock.

### GRAIN

#### WHEAT—REPORTED DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS IN TRADE FOR BRITISH IMMIGRANTS

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. How many millions of bushels of surplus wheat does the Prime Minister expect will be sold under the scheme announced in the *Free Press* by the Minister of Agriculture whereby wheat will be traded for British immigrants?

**Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister):** I have not seen the *Free Press* story, and I do not expect that any wheat would be sold under any plan such as that referred to in the hon. member's question.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** That is what I thought.

**Mr. Drew:** May I ask the Prime Minister if he is aware that according to the C.B.C. news report the minister has confirmed the story?

**Mr. St. Laurent (Quebec East):** No, I am not aware that the minister has confirmed the story. All I saw was a paragraph in the *Journal* last night which purports to be a story relating to some suggestion that might have been made by the Minister of Agriculture. However, that is not to my knowledge, and all I can say is there is no such plan being considered by the government.

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. J. M. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Agriculture, with regard to his interesting suggestion to exchange immigrants for wheat, whether it will be on a weight for weight basis, so many pounds of immigrant for so many pounds of wheat?

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. What consideration has he given to the weird plan of the Minister of Agriculture? Is it intended to extend it to people from continental nations? How many immigrants are envisaged as coming in the first year?

**Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, like some other hon. members apparently, I listen to the radio while I am taking my bath in the morning. I heard the same piece of inaccurate news, which the hon. member for Assiniboia has characterized as a question of privilege, which I do not think was really a question of privilege, because I do not think one is entitled to correct in the house a statement made outside the house.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I am giving an answer to a question which was put to me, sir.

**Mr. Fleming:** And undertaking to act as a schoolmaster.

**Mr. Knowles:** You are all wet.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I understood that any suggestions the right hon. gentleman may have made were made in a purely private capacity as someone interested in the development of this country, and he has done a great deal to develop the country.

**Mr. Fleming:** I ask the minister whether he would make use of a towel?

#### REQUEST FOR TABLING OF REGULATIONS WITH RESPECT TO BANK LOANS

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Alistair Stewart (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, may I pursue the question I asked yesterday? Will the minister table a copy of the letter sent to the banks giving the basis on which they might make loans to farmers under the impending regulation?

**Hon. W. E. Harris (Minister of Finance):** Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

#### RUSSIA—EXCHANGE OF PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. A. M. Nicholson (Mackenzie):** I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare who, I presume, is acting for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the Canadian Press stories in the morning papers to the effect that Russia may buy \$5 million worth of wheat a year from Canada, would the minister