

Inquiries of the Ministry

I am being very frank: we have difficulty in getting the unanimous support of exporters and importers. The tendency of importers of course is to take immediate advantages whenever possible of current price levels, and to forget the long-term considerations and their importance. Importers may not realize clearly enough the long-term consequences of their action and the results they will have on the future marketing of the commodity in question in the world.

Although the difficulties are great I hope that importers and exporters alike will realize the importance of the International Grains Arrangement and bring their policies into line with that agreement very soon.

WHEAT—INQUIRY AS TO PRESENCE IN CANADA OF U.S.S.R. MISSION

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is it true that, as reported in some quarters, a trade mission from Soviet Russia is presently in Ottawa in order to negotiate the remainder of the three year contract for the 135 million bushel balance of Canadian wheat.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, if my information is good, and I think it is, that is unfortunately not true.

WHEAT—REASONS FOR LOSS OF MARKETS

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday when I wished to question the minister about discussions he has had regarding wheat sales, so that he could explain to the house why Canada has lost about 33 per cent of her former world market, you refused to allow me to ask the question. Yet when a similar question was directed to the minister today, the minister was permitted to answer without being ruled out of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Will the hon. member kindly resume his seat? The hon. member should note that the Chair made the same ruling today as yesterday, when the question referred to was ruled out of order. I am therefore pleased to see that the hon. member has reminded the Chair that I was consistent in rulings today and yesterday. Unfortunately the minister found a way to go beyond the ruling of the Chair, and that is why I interrupted him. I wanted to suggest to him that he was actually ignoring the ruling of the Chair, and that the type of question

[Mr. Pepin.]

being asked ought normally to be placed on the order paper.

Mr. McIntosh: I rise on the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. The question I asked yesterday was of national importance and urgency. It was not argumentative and I fail to see why it was ruled out of order without any explanation for that having been given.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member has no right to ask for an explanation from the Chair as to why a ruling was made. The rules provide that when there is a matter of urgency to be discussed opportunity is given for a discussion to be held at the time of adjournment.

GREECE—LOSS OF SALE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. This question relates to lost Canadian sales. Considering the great value of the potential sale I am about to mention, will the minister explain the reasons for our losing the contract to supply a \$75 million nuclear power station to Greece?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I wonder whether it is in order to ask the minister to give an explanation of this kind. I think this type of question ought to be placed on the order paper.

Mr. Crouse: May I ask another supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since Canada lost the sale of a \$75 million nuclear power station to Greece, did this country make any offer to arrange for credits for such sale through our Export Credits Insurance Corporation?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Well, Mr. Speaker, the opposition speaks very freely these days about "lost sales", but there is nothing in Adam's will to say that Canada will make sales of this or of that to Greece, to Japan or to China. We are competitors, we are bidding for these sales. Sometimes we win and sometimes we lose.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): This time we lost.

Mr. Pepin: We made a bid. We made an offer. The offer was backed by our Export Credits Insurance Corporation but the Greek government did not accept our offer, seeming to prefer the British offer because of general trade considerations. It seems that the British government offered to buy Greek tobacco. Apparently the British do