

to the government to deal with without any necessity for general discussion?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the objective of the proposals is obviously directed toward the improvement of relations between Canada and the European community. That is the general nature of them. As to the details of the proposals, I refer to my previous answer: it is possible that it would not be to the advantage of Canada to make them the subject of public discussion at this time. However, I will gladly look into the matter.

Mr. Stanfield: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to be too persistent, but is the government proposing some form of special association with the European Economic Community?

Mr. Trudeau: No, Mr. Speaker, that is not the intention. The agreement that is suggested is a trade agreement, the intent of which is to improve trade relations between Canada and the European community. There is a procedure for consultations proposed, but there is nothing as far reaching as the hon. gentleman suggests, and certainly nothing discriminatory against any other group of nations.

I might add that when I return from my visit to Europe I will be making a statement at some point in the House, if the House so desires, and the House will be informed of the nature of the discussions and the progress that has been made. I can assure the hon. gentleman that there will be no final position taken on any type of agreement of which he seems to be afraid without any report to the House.

EFFECT OF CANADA'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS NATO ON
POSSIBLE AGREEMENT WITH EUROPEAN ECONOMIC
COMMUNITY

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. As the unwillingness of the European Economic Community to grant Canada preferential trade treatment, which was very fully reported in this morning's press, has been materially increased by this government's attitude toward helping to maintain world peace through NATO, is the government planning to adopt a more positive attitude toward NATO in this regard?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the government's position on NATO has been stated previously on many occasions, and I do not think the hon. member can say as much for his own party.

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FOOD PRICES REVIEW BOARD

NATURE OF PROPOSED EXTENSION OF POWERS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The minister recently suggested that the powers of the Food Prices Review Board were going to be extended. I wonder whether the minister would inform the House whether or not this extension is going to

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include the authority to order roll-backs of price increases when they are found to be unwarranted, and if not, why not?

● (1440)

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the answer is no.

[English]

CONTINUATION AND POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF WEEKLY
PRICE SURVEYS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister's answer is consistent with other aspects of government policy. Can the minister inform the House whether or not the useful weekly survey of the Food Prices Review Board in the Ottawa area, which has had some effect subsequently in bringing down prices which one hopes is not a temporary situation in this area, will be extended to other parts of Canada.

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): This was a pilot project, Mr. Speaker, and I am very glad of its success. It serves to prove that this board is indeed making a useful contribution, and I hope it will be possible to extend this type of investigation to other Canadian towns.

[English]

ALLEGED FAILURE OF RETAILERS TO REFLECT LOWER BEEF
PRICES—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, the minister is at least batting 500. I have a final supplementary for the minister. In view of the fact that there is some evidence available now that the low prices paid to farmers for their beef products have not been reflected in the retail prices, would the minister take steps to have the Food Prices Review Board review the discrepancy between these prices?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): This matter is under review, Mr. Speaker. I am working in close consultation with my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, and I expect a useful decision will be taken in the near future.

[English]

NATURE OF PROPOSED EXTENSION OF POWERS

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, yesterday outside the House the minister enlarged on an answer he gave me in the House in respect of any restriction placed on the Food Prices Review Board and at that time outside the House said it was planned to further extend the powers of the board. Is he in a position to tell the House precisely what he had in mind with regard to these renewed powers or new powers for the board?