

Oral Questions

Minister a further question. Bearing in mind the increase in the price of bread which has taken place in recent days, and in view of the assurance given by the right hon. gentleman in the course of his presentation on Tuesday, has any firm undertaking been received from the bakers of bread in Canada that there will in fact be no further increase in the price of bread in October? Has any agreement been reached with the bakers to suspend price increases and, if so, for how long have the bakers agreed to hold the line?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): The same type of question was asked yesterday, and replied to by the minister responsible for the Wheat Board. He indicated he would be informing the House as soon as possible of any final arrangement concluded with the Wheat Board to meet this problem.

Mr. Stanfield: The Prime Minister gave a firm assurance to the House on Tuesday that the increase in subsidy from \$1 to \$1.25 would prevent a further increase in price from taking place in October. Am I to understand he is now telling the House he is not in a position to say that the bakers have given a firm assurance, or that the government has entered into an agreement with the bakers to prevent a further price increase taking place? Is that the position?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: I repeat, the minister responsible for the Wheat Board informed the House yesterday of the answer to this question, and unless my memory is inaccurate he also informed the House that he had received such an assurance from the bakers.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Drury: Yes, he did.

Mr. Stanfield: May I ask the Prime Minister a direct question, seeking a direct answer?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Having made a firm statement in the House on Tuesday, can the Prime Minister now tell the House that the government has a firm agreement with the bakers that the price of bread will not be increased in the month of October, and that the government has a firm agreement with the bakers as to the duration of that agreement?

Mr. Trudeau: I do not have the exact answer.

Some hon. Members: Oh!

Mr. Trudeau: I don't know what all the excitement is about over there. I have been asked a so-called direct question but obviously members opposite do not want a direct answer.

[Mr. Stanfield.]

GRAIN**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON WHEAT SUBSIDY POLICY**

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): I should like to direct a question to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. Since both the premier of Saskatchewan and the Leader of the Opposition in Saskatchewan have rejected the proposals made by the government as unsatisfactory, can the hon. gentleman inform us when he will rise in the House to place this policy on record and explain in detail how it is going to work to the advantage of either the producer or the consumer?

● (1440)

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): I think it is very clear how it will work to the advantage of both. The firm price of \$3.25 for sale of wheat by the Canadian Wheat Board to the millers assures that the cost of wheat in products consumed in Canada will not increase through this long-term period, and therefore the consumers will have that assurance and a lower price available to them now than would be available if prices were simply allowed to be tied to the world price.

On the other hand, from the point of view of the producer the assurance of this long-term price regardless of world prices in the future is extremely important. Producers generally have favoured long-term agreements in order that they have orderly pricing and in this particular case this is effective of course in relation to the domestic market which is perhaps one-eighth or so of the wheat sold but it does give him a price at the floor of \$3.25 over what is supposed to be a seven-year period and that amount is higher than any price ever received for Canadian wheat except in the last few months.

REQUEST FOR TABLING OF AGREEMENT WITH WHEAT BOARD

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, in light of the statement that the minister made in this House today and yesterday, will he now table in this House any agreement such as he described between the government and the Canadian Wheat Board or any Order in Council that has been passed instructing the Canadian Wheat Board along these lines and will he say whether either one of them is valid for seven years?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, the exact steps for formally implementing this agreement or validating it will be put forward in due course and brought fully to the attention of the House.

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FOOD PRICES**BREAD—INQUIRY AS TO AGREEMENT OF BAKERS TO MAINTAIN PRESENT PRICE**

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, having regard to the fatuous answer given to me by the Prime Minister, I think on July 26, when he said bread would go up only one-tenth of one cent, may I ask if