

April 18 the minister undertook consideration of a suggestion to extend the interest-free period on student loans which are now due for graduates who are unemployed through no fault of their own. The minister made no mention of this problem in his budget. Does he plan any action to alleviate this problem?

• (1500)

**Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member would allow me to take the question as notice and get back to him as soon as possible.

**Mr. Stanfield:** While the minister is considering that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask him whether he is prepared to review the repayment procedures his department is now following with a view to restoring responsibility for collection either to the Department of Finance or to some other government agency? Would he at least undertake a review of some of the procedures followed by collection agencies on whom the Department of Finance is placing the responsibility for collecting overdue loans? I make this request because I understand it is being suggested by some of these agencies to students who owe money that they should borrow from finance companies at rates as high as 18 per cent in order to get the Department of Finance off their backs.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I do not accept some of the statements in this question. I am advised we have discussed the situation of students who happen to be unemployed and are unable at this stage to repay loans with the chartered banks. They have agreed to co-operate in cases of unemployment by carrying such debts for a period of some six months without requiring payment before submitting claims under the guarantee provisions. That step we have already taken, and I will look into the other aspects of the hon. member's question.

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[Translation]

#### REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

CLOSING OF CIP PLANT AT TÉMISCAMINGUE—  
DISCUSSION WITH QUEBEC AUTHORITIES TO ALLEVIATE  
SITUATION

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

In view of the closing down of the Canadian International Paper Company on May 31, can the minister tell us whether he has held discussions with Quebec authorities to ascertain whether it is possible to avoid hardship for the population of Témiscamingue, or are such meetings planned for this week or next in order to study the situation prevailing in Témiscamingue?

**Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Mr. Speaker, that is a situation we are following very closely. We have prepared various plans. I have already met with the president of the company and he is not interested in reopening the plant, the mill. In fact, I have even offered him an updating grant, but he is not interested. Therefore, something else must be found and that is what we are trying to do.

#### Inquiries of the Ministry

**Mr. Caouette:** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the hon. minister.

Has the Quebec government submitted any plans to him, or does he expect to receive any before the plant closes down on May 31?

**Mr. Marchand (Langelier):** If contacts are established at the senior official level in my department, I might inquire and report to the hon. member on Wednesday.

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[English]

#### GRAIN

WHEAT—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON PRICES  
FARMERS RECEIVE ON EXPORT SALES—ADEQUACY TO  
RETURN PROFIT

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice in his other capacity. In view of the fact that at a meeting of the various farm organizations recently held in Minneapolis there was agreement in the final statement that was issued that, while our exports of wheat throughout the world are increasing greatly because of the increase in demand, the prices being paid by importing countries do not return any profit to the farmer, I would ask the minister this question. As every one of the competitors knows what the other competing country is receiving, will he let the Canadian farmers know what the prices are for wheat sold for export, Nos. 1, 2 and 3, or whatever the new classifications are?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, the Wheat Board in the ordinary course posts the prices at which it is offering wheat. I should point out to the right hon. gentleman that the increase in Canadian exports of wheat is taking place despite the fact that this year the over-all trade in wheat is down.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, that is the revised version but it is not what the agricultural organizations which met in Minneapolis said. I ask him whether he will now say if the prices being received for Canadian wheat by the Wheat Board for the several grades will be made known, and is it a fact that the prices being received are below a level that will bring the farmer any kind of a return?

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the prices the Wheat Board quotes are available and known and can be compared with a previous year. Therefore the exact return can be calculated.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, I find it difficult to understand the evasiveness of the hon. gentleman except that he is afraid to let the farmers know that their wheat is being sold at virtually firesale prices.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.