

*Oral Questions*

sectors, namely what type of harvest we have, not only in the various cash crops but the grain crops next year.

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**AGRICULTURE****MILK—GOVERNMENT POSITION ON RE-INTRODUCTION OF SUBSIDY**

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to address my supplementary to the benign Minister of Agriculture. Since one of the specific measures the government could take to bring down the price of at least one food item is in the area of milk subsidies, and it has been documented that one of the major reasons for the increase in milk prices has been the removal of the federal subsidy, has the minister's department re-thought their earlier decision on this? If so, will he inform the House whether the government is going to reintroduce milk subsidies?

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I first want to point out that the marketing sector absorbs more than 60 per cent of consumer spending on home-grown farm food, leaving the farmer with less than 40 per cent. With regard to the milk subsidy, we administer that. It was a government decision to put it on and a government decision to take it off. It would be a government decision if it is decided to do anything more about this.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, one of us is not understanding the other. I agree that it is a government decision. However, can the minister advise whether the government plans to reintroduce the milk subsidy?

**Mr. Whelan:** As the hon. member knows, Mr. Speaker, there has been no decision by the government to do so.

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[Translation]

**SOCIAL SECURITY****SUGGESTED INTRODUCTION OF IDENTIFICATION CARD—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

**Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I want to put a question to the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau).

Since the Minister of National Health and Welfare announced on December 13, 1974 that an identification card would be provided to the 1,900,000 recipients of the Old Age Security Plan, so that these people might be entitled to consumer discounts, reduced transportation fares and other benefits given senior citizens, does the Prime Minister intend to extend the identification card to all Canadians to prevent losses due to the frequent stealing of cheques—particularly during the Christmas holidays or at other times—of federal or provincial family allowances, income tax refunds, old age security pensions, and all other benefits, thefts which deprive recipients of millions of dollars and at the same time cause a lot of problems to their victims? Does the right hon. Prime

[Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton).]

Minister intend to introduce the identification card to prevent all these problems?

● (1220)

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the introduction of a universal and compulsory system of identification cards would lead us to a "Prussianism" which does not appeal too much to this government. It would imply that the cards would have to be updated, checked by the police, renewed each time Canadians would move to a new address, and for many reasons of this kind, the government is not prepared to welcome the hon. member's suggestion.

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[English]

**TRADE****EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF CANADIAN CONCESSIONS TO EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY—POSSIBLE IMPOSITION OF TARIFF AGAINST CANADIAN GRAIN**

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In view of the report coming out of Brussels yesterday that the European Common Market is holding off for two months in order to give further study of the imposition of a tariff against Canadian exports to the countries of the European Common Market, particularly the very important British market, which is normally due to go into effect on December 31, is it true that the minister knows of this report, and would he advise the House?

**Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce):** There are two points. One is that the deadline for the withdrawal by Canada of concessions to the Common Market has been extended by two months at the request of Canada and agreed to by the Common Market. That has been made necessary because we have not yet been able to reach agreement with respect to the concessions owing to us by the Common Market as a result of the enlargement, particularly with respect to grains, barley and wheat. However, there is no truth to what was in the other part of the preamble of the hon. member's question, if I understood it, that the Europeans were considering placing a tariff on Canadian wheat or barley at this time.

**SUGAR—POSSIBLE NEGOTIATION OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS TO REDUCE PRICE**

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Is the government willing at this time to enter into bilateral agreements with various countries on sugar in order to help bring down the price of sugar in this country?

**Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce):** We are interested in negotiating international commodity agreements where there is both a producer and a consumer interest. Indeed, we have been busy trying to prepare the ground for a new international sugar agreement.