

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker, I had almost finished my remarks. I certainly want to say, in view of the attack by the minister on the legitimate efforts of members of the opposition to ensure that there is some control of government spending of this money, that I request the minister, on behalf of the opposition to withdraw those remarks which are unfair.

Mr. Speaker: This is obviously debate. There is no precedent to indicate that this kind of remark ought to be withdrawn, either by the minister or an individual member. I will again recognize the hon. member for Greenwood.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

AID TO BANGLA DESH—CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In light of the recent announcement by CIDA that the total Canadian contribution for emergency relief for refugees in India and Bangla Desh amounts to \$11.5 million out of a total allocation of \$20 million, and in light of reliable reports to the effect that there is immediate urgency for transportation and communication, has consideration been given by the government for emergency action to provide STOL aircraft, locomotives, bridges and technical equipment, in order to prevent an even greater disaster in Bangla Desh?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, so long as I am not misunderstood, the answer to the question is, yes. Consideration has been given to this possibility, although our resources in this field are not as good as in other fields and we are not as well situated as some other countries to provide this kind of help. However, the President of CIDA is going to Dacca during his trip to the subcontinent and will investigate the question directly.

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GRAIN

SALE TO RUSSIA—POSSIBLE SHIPMENT THROUGH PORT OF CHURCHILL

Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice in relation to his responsibilities in answering for the Canadian Wheat Board. I should like to ask, in relation to the recent announcement by the minister of a sale of grain to Russia, whether or not substantial quantities of this grain will be shipped through the port of Churchill this coming shipping season?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows from the announcement of the sale, the option was given to the buyer of taking a certain quantity of this grain through the port of Churchill. The

Inquiries of the Ministry

Wheat Board, of course, tries to accommodate buyers in every possible way, and the decision as to how much in the end will be taken through that port is largely up to the buyer.

Mr. Simpson: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since the Wheat Board has indicated from time to time that it is interested in moving substantial quantities of grain out of the port of Churchill, would the minister co-operate by trying to influence his colleague, the Minister of Transport, to carry out the very necessary dredging program at Churchill this summer. The lack of these facilities is probably one reason the Russians have not taken greater advantage of the port of Churchill.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That is not a supplementary question but, rather, a representation to the minister.

ALLEGED WITHDRAWAL OF OFFERS FOR SALE—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Justice, in his capacity as answering for the Wheat Board, whether the Wheat Board has temporarily withdrawn offers for the sale of grain to other nations. Could the minister give the House the reason for this situation?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, the Wheat Board is, of course, continuing to make sales of grain for future delivery over certain periods. I understand that because sales already made have taxed the port of Vancouver to its limit, the Wheat Board may have ceased offering deliveries for a particular period of time to particular countries.

POSSIBLE USE OF INLAND CLEANING FACILITIES TO ALLEVIATE CONGESTION AT VANCOUVER

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the answer given by the minister that this year new sales have not been accepted, or will not be accepted for particular periods of time through Vancouver, is the government giving consideration to cleaning new grain at the inland terminals or expanding the facilities at Vancouver, so that these additional sales are not lost to grain farmers?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Yes, Mr. Speaker. As a result of the very thorough work of examining the handling and transportation system which we have done this last year and a half, and in the expectation that we will reach record sales levels, we have studied every facet of the transportation situation and will be in a position, at an early date, to begin some additional inland cleaning in a regular way. The Wheat Board is now fairly satisfied that these facilities can, in a particular way, add to the total capacity of the system for delivering grain. We are also in discussion with a number of parties about additional facilities at Vancouver.