

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): So far as this party is concerned, we would be prepared to start at four o'clock, as suggested by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald), or as soon as orders of the day are called.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Perhaps it would be most workman-like to start as soon as orders of the day are called.

Mr. Speaker: Is that the wish of hon. members?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed unanimously that we will proceed with the motion of the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands under Standing Order 26 immediately after orders of the day are called? Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**TRADE****WHEAT—EFFECT OF REDUCTION IN U.S. EXPORT PRICES**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like first of all to welcome the Prime Minister back to the friendly atmosphere of the House of Commons. While I do not wish to trespass upon the subject matter of the debate, I wonder whether it would be in order to ask the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce if he has had an opportunity to consult with the Wheat Board and whether he can state briefly to the house what effects the price cuts by the United States may have upon the outlook for this country?

Mr. Speaker: I have some doubts as to the question now being asked by the Leader of the Opposition. We have just agreed there will be a debate in 40 minutes' time. It seems to me that perhaps that would be the time to get answers to questions which normally might be asked during the question period.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I thought it might help the debate somewhat if the minister were to make a brief statement.

GRAIN**INQUIRY AS TO INCOME PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR CEREAL PRODUCERS**

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a

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question to the right hon. Prime Minister. In a speech which the right hon. gentleman made in the city of Winnipeg last year on June 2, he said:

—the government will immediately involve all interested parties in the development of a self-sustaining program of income protection for western cereal producers.

Later in his statement he said this would be done early in 1969. Has the government yet evolved this program for income protection, and is the Prime Minister prepared to announce what it is either now or in the course of the debate which will be held later today?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as will be apparent in the debate later, there are certain forms of income protection which have already been implemented by the government. I think it would be well if we waited until the debate began to go into this question.

UNECONOMIC FARM UNITS—POSSIBILITY OF PURCHASE

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact the Prime Minister has apparently been reported as having stated that some uneconomic farm units might be purchased, will the Prime Minister say whether this would apply to western Canada inasmuch as the Secretary of State for External Affairs has apparently said it would only apply to eastern Canada?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. With respect, I must suggest to hon. members that perhaps they should not have their cake and eat it too. Hon. members agreed a moment ago that there should be a debate on this subject. Therefore they will have the whole day in which to make suggestions and ask the questions they are seeking to ask now. I think it would be appropriate to wait until we reach the debate later on to ask these questions. It is a basic rule applicable to the question period that questions should not be asked about matters which are to be discussed immediately. Such questions normally have been ruled out of order. I realize that questions must be asked about certain matters and I do not wish to appear to be unduly restrictive. However, not much would be gained by making an exception to the rule and then proceeding to the debate immediately thereafter.

Hon. members know that on occasions when there has been protracted questioning