

AGRICULTURE

POTATOES—REQUEST FOR COMPENSATION FOR NEWFOUNDLAND FARMERS

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture of which I have given him notice. Would he be prepared to consider granting compensation to Newfoundland farmers who suffered serious losses to potato crops owing to early frost damage, and would he advise what can be done to assist the farmers in this emergency?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): As the hon. member is aware, the responsibility for providing assistance in cases of this kind rests with the provincial authorities. In the past there have been occasions when the cost of providing assistance has been such as to cause serious financial problems, and federal funds were provided to assist the provinces in carrying out their responsibilities to producers. However, recently the federal contributions for crop failures have generally been confined to those made under the Crop Insurance Act. Up to the present time, we have received no representations from Newfoundland to the effect that they wish crop insurance to be introduced.

ASSISTANCE TO WESTERN FARMERS

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the government taking or considering any action to provide relief for a large number of farmers in Canada, particularly in the west, who are unable to meet their obligations as they fall due because of the situation there? This is a responsibility which, in the past, has been assigned to the federal government by legislation.

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Yes, Mr. Speaker, very positive action has been taken, and part of it was announced by the Minister of Agriculture a week ago last Friday.

SCIENCE SERVICES

INQUIRY AS TO ESTABLISHMENT OF MINISTRY

Mr. J. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Now that the Prime Minister has received the report of the OECD on Canada's science policy, does he intend to act on one of its central recommendations and establish a ministry solely responsible for science policy?

Inquiries of the Ministry

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): We have a minister responsible for science policy, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Broadbent: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Apparently the Prime Minister misunderstood my question. I asked whether the Prime Minister is considering establishing a ministry responsible solely for science policy?

Mr. Trudeau: We may consider naming some more Ministers without Portfolio, if the opposition does not object.

Mr. Bell: Is there anybody left?

[Later:]

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I would like to come back to the question of science policy and ask the Prime Minister if, for once, he would try to give a serious answer to a serious question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Trudeau: It was a serious answer, Mr. Speaker.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC—CENSORING OF MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Do the accounts of the minister's press conference held during his visit to the United Arab Republic give grounds for the belief that the minister's remarks were censored by government officials of that country?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Fairweather: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister formally protested against this act of discourtesy, and what steps has Canada taken to ensure that the homes of embassy officials are free from search and other harassment?

Mr. Sharp: I do not see the relevance of the second part of the question. As to the first, I am not quite sure whether my department has yet made a formal protest, but at least one will be made and I may make one myself to the ambassador of the United Arab Republic.

[Later:]

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the