

INTERPROVINCIAL MARKETING—DISCUSSION WITH PROVINCIAL MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): May I direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the minister met with his counterparts, particularly in Ontario, Quebec but also in other provinces, to discuss the present dislocation of marketing? If not, is he planning a meeting with these ministers in the very near future in an effort to resolve the situation?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): I have not held such a meeting within the last few days but it is generally agreed that as soon as we have the legal authority on which to base an agreement we would meet at once.

Mr. Gleave: Does the minister not consider the constitution as now written a sufficient legal basis upon which to hold conversations with his counterparts in the provinces?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That question is certainly not in order.

INTERPROVINCIAL MARKETING—COMMUNICATION OF FEDERAL POSITION TO PROVINCIAL PREMIERS

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Has the Prime Minister communicated the attitude of the federal government in this matter to the Prime Ministers of Quebec and Ontario, setting out the position the government intends to take before the Supreme Court and stating that the government considers that the action they have taken is ultra vires of the constitution? Has the prime minister set out that position?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker, we set it out last September before the present case went to the courts. As I said in answer to the leader of the New Democratic Party a few moments ago, we did state our position quite clearly in September on the basis of the importance of finding a solution to the marketing problem in Canada. At the time, I repeat, we had the support, if not of every province, of certainly an immense majority of the provinces. I see the hon. member for Crowfoot wants to ask a supplementary. It is true that since then some provinces have apparently wavered in their support of the bill, but I am not surprised; they have been waiting for it for a year and a half because of the hon. member's obstruction.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Before I give the floor to the hon. member for Crowfoot may I point out that we should give a chance to an hon. member representing the party seated at the extreme left of the House. I will allow a few more supplementaries and then invite the hon. member for Bellechasse to ask a question.

Mr. Horner: I rise on a question of privilege.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Horner: Hon. members may laugh, but how can one man be so powerful as to stop a whole government? I have been accused of holding up the legislation. I do not think that statement can be justified or substantiated by the Prime Minister or anyone else. I am wrongfully accused.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That is debate between the Prime Minister and the hon. member for Crowfoot. Having stated his question of privilege, perhaps the hon. member might now ask his supplementary.

An hon. Member: Don't be so modest, Jack.

FARM PRODUCTS MARKETING BILL—EXEMPTION OF CATTLE

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot): My supplementary arises out of the Liberal party's policy convention held in April, 1970—I think it was on the third or fourth. They stated then that no provincial barriers should be permitted to prevent the interprovincial movement of farm products. The Prime Minister has based his case for Bill C-176 on the September conference with the premiers. Is he not aware that at that conference the premiers agreed that cattle would be exempt? Cattle are not exempt under the bill and therefore no province can agree with the legislation.

An hon. Member: They are exempt.

Mr. Horner: They are not.

An hon. Member: Read the bill, Jack.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Hon. members are again injecting into the question period debate on Bill C-176. I realize that this is an important matter and that questions can be asked about it, but those questions should not go to the extent of discussing what is or is not contained in a measure which is before the House. Hon. members should bear this in mind.

Mr. Horner: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said the provinces had agreed to early passage of this bill. They agreed on one condition, that cattle should be exempt. Cattle are not exempt at this date and therefore the provinces are disagreeing with the bill.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am sure all these arguments will be made when we reach the debate on Bill C-176.

[Translation]

CONFIDENTIALITY OF PAYMENTS BY CANADIAN DAIRY COMMISSION FOR BUTTER STORAGE

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

Further to the partial reply to my question No. 1,294 on the order paper concerning the total paid by the Canadian Dairy Commission for the storage of butter during the fiscal years 1968-69 and 1969-70, could the minister tell us why details of payments to individuals or