

member for Cape Breton-East Richmond is rising on a question of privilege.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege parallels the question of privilege which was allowed the Prime Minister, in that he referred to last week when he came back from his visit with Her Majesty, the Queen. He made reference to what the Acting Prime Minister had said in this House in answer to a question, and on the same question of privilege I want to take up an answer—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Hon. members will see where this kind of exchange leads. We have 40 minutes for our question period. There are now eight minutes left. If we spend all our time arguing about what was said and what was not said, what will be achieved is again beyond my understanding. If hon. members think we should debate during the question period what was said by a minister during a previous question period, I have to listen but I suspect that this is really not a question at all.

● (1520)

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): A question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. It only emphasizes the fact that the Prime Minister should never have been allowed to get away with that privilege which is now being denied me.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Hon. members will appreciate that I certainly do not want to get involved in a debate. The hon. member for Calgary North raised a question of privilege. It is traditional that when a member takes the time of the House for what he considers to be a legitimate question of privilege which involves the actions or statements of another member, that member ought to be given the opportunity to reply briefly. It seems to me that in this House even the Prime Minister must have the same right.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I do not believe hon. members should hold it against the Chair that the Chair allowed the right hon. Prime Minister to say a word in response to a question of privilege in which he was personally implicated. He was given this right. I suggest there is no question of privilege and that this is debate between members. I would hope that we could try to continue the question period in the few minutes that are left.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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GRAIN

FEED GRAINS—REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE PRINCIPLE OF ORDERLY MARKETING WILL BE MAINTAINED—DISCUSSION AT WESTERN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES CONFERENCE

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the telegram from the Premier of Saskatchewan

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requesting clarification of the government's position in regard to the marketing of feed grains, which results from repeated statements by the minister in charge of the Wheat Board that the method of pricing of feed grains would be changed, has the Prime Minister been able to reply to the Premier of Saskatchewan assuring him that the principle of orderly marketing and the effectiveness of the Canadian Wheat Board as a marketing agency would be maintained? Has he been able to give this assurance?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as I read the telegram of the Premier of Saskatchewan, he was expressing fears based not so much on what the Minister of Justice had said, but more on the basis of rumours that had appeared in some daily newspaper. I can assure the hon. member that I will assure the Premier of Saskatchewan that the consultations on this whole subject which have been going on between the federal government and various organizations and the provincial ministers of agriculture will continue. We do hope that at the Western Economic Opportunities Conference later this month this will be an important subject to be discussed under the item of agriculture. The premier's telegram indicates that he hoped the discussion would still be open then. I can give him the assurance that it will. The federal government will be prepared to hear arguments at that time—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! Order, please!

Mr. Trudeau:—from the premier on this.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. A supplementary by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar.

FEED GRAINS—REQUEST FOR POLICY STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, in view of the reply of the Prime Minister on his intention to hold this open could I then ask the minister in charge of the Wheat Board whether he will lay to rest these rumours to which the Prime Minister has referred? After all, as minister in charge of wheat, who raised the rumours, will he take an early opportunity to rise in this House and state what the policy of the government is and what it is their intention to put before that conference?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: No lawyer's talk now.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, the only effective way of laying that rumour to rest would be the actual policy statement itself which will, as the Prime Minister said, come after the premiers' Western Economic Opportunities Conference. However, I am preparing a reply to the Premier of Saskatchewan to the telegram which he sent to me indicating that the press reports about our policy do not fairly nor adequately reflect that policy, so that their excessive concern might stop.