

Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION**NEWSTART PROGRAM, THE PAS, MANITOBA—APPOINTMENT OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS**

Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill): I have a question for the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. It relates to the Newstart program at The Pas, Manitoba. In view of the reported \$1 million budget for this project and in view of the fact that little or nothing is being done for lack of a mandate, can the minister say when the board of directors will be appointed and moneys allotted in order that projects can be commenced?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, will you allow me to take at least part of this question as notice and I will give an answer to the hon. member. It is sufficient for me to say at this time that the Newstart program is also under the jurisdiction of the provincial government and that from now on the latter will have to be requested to make appointments.

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NATIONAL DISASTERS**SAINT JEAN-VIANNEY—FEDERAL AID TO VICTIMS**

Mr. Henry Latulippe (Compton): Mr. Speaker, could the Acting Prime Minister tell us whether the government intends to take any action in order to help the victims of Saint Jean-Vianney, Lac-Saint-Jean, and what will be its contribution?

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): My colleagues have informed me that we are now in touch with the provincial government and discussing how best the federal government can help.

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GRAIN**WHEAT—EXPORT POSITION IF GREAT BRITAIN ENTERS EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET**

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): My question is directed to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. I would like him to let the farmers of Canada know, particularly the wheat farmers, what the situation is expected to be in reference to the reduction of wheat exports if Great Britain enters the European Common Market?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Not only is the question a hypothetical one but it is obviously highly speculative as well. The British Minister of Agriculture indicated a year ago in conversation with me that he expected no significant diminution in the requirements of Great Britain for the quality of wheat which is grown by Canada and can be supplied by

[Mr. Côté (Longueuil).]

Canada and several of its competitors, and therefore our access for that particular grain should be relatively assured. However, the broader question of the implications for coarse grains is quite a different matter since they are available within the Common Market itself on occasion.

Mr. Diefenbaker: My question is directed to the subject matter of wheat and it is no longer a speculative situation. Has the Wheat Board made any estimate as to the reduction in wheat exports to the United Kingdom should Britain enter the Common Market as is now apparently beyond question?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, it will continue to be the Wheat Board's objective to maximize our exports of wheat by maintaining the best of relations with customers such as the United Kingdom and also such as the Soviet Union, if I may mention it in passing.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I wonder whether the minister would give Parliament the information that is apparently available outside. Does he know that Mr. Gibbings, his friend and supporter who is now on the Wheat Board, has said within the last few days that there will be substantial reduction in exports of wheat to the United Kingdom? Has he not told the minister that?

Mr. Lang: I believe I have read the same press reports as the right hon. gentleman. I notice that the press reports referred to coarse grains without very much specification.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am speaking of wheat. So that there will be no misunderstanding, I am asking about wheat. I am not asking about flaxseed or any other seeds or grains. What about wheat? Let us have an answer from the minister.

Mr. Lang: I think it is true that I have answered very fully both with regard to wheat and to other things about which the right hon. gentleman chose not to ask.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The minister did not answer about wheat. The minister does not know; the Wheat Board does not tell him.

[Later:]

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot): I have a supplementary question for the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board. Is it not a fact that if Great Britain enters the European Common Market the tariff on grain going into that country from Canada will be increased from \$68 a ton?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest that the hon. member has put his question in an argumentative manner when he says "is it not a fact" that such and such will result from an action. I do not think that a question asked in those terms is in order. He might wish to rephrase the question.

Mr. Horner: Indeed, I would like to rephrase my question. Will there be an increase in the tariff on grain going into Great Britain if that country joins the European Common Market, and how much will that increase be?