

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Pepin: —is being imported in Canada. This might have changed, I will check and report back. I said "scrap", Mr. Speaker.

TAXATION

CONFIDENTIALITY OF WHITE PAPER

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to follow up a question I asked the Prime Minister yesterday. I asked him whether he would check to see if there were any leaks in respect of the briefing on the white paper. Can he advise us now how many copies of the white paper have been handed out, in whose hands they are, and in fact whether there have been any leaks.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I have made the check, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Finance may wish to give his own reply.

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, copies of the white paper were not distributed. As you know, the members of the press are locked up in a room and will have copies of the white paper in their hands. Also as is usual, sealed bundles have been sent across the country. In the past we have sent these to the branches of the Bank of Canada. In this instance we sent them to the district taxation offices. They are sealed and will not be opened until six o'clock tonight. As for distribution among members of the government, I think I have given a copy of the white paper to two of my cabinet colleagues.

Mr. Woolliams: Are these people in the department who have received the sealed packages under oath to keep secret or are you just depending on their good behaviour to not disclose anything?

Mr. Benson: In the Department of National Revenue, all employees are under oath. I, of course, told them to keep this secret until six o'clock and I believe they will do so. We have never in the past had a leak in sending such documents to the Bank of Canada offices. This has been done for a great many years.

TRADE

SASKATCHEWAN PLAN TO BARTER WHEAT FOR MACHINERY

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the

Inquiries of the Ministry

Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Has the government decided whether it will allow the type of barter plan being promoted by the province of Saskatchewan involving the exchange of Japanese electric generators for Saskatchewan wheat? Also can the minister inform the House whether other countries have made inquiries about the possibility of barter arrangements since the suggestion of the Saskatchewan-Japanese arrangement was first raised?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): I do not think the government of Canada can prevent the province of Saskatchewan from buying wheat from the Wheat Board at the regular prices and bartering with it. I believe any individual or even the provincial leader could do this.

I have been almost tangling with both the former prime minister of Canada and the Premier of Saskatchewan on this subject. This is very daring on my part. I have been trying to show the disadvantages of this operation in terms of co-operation between exporters-countries, in terms of the jeopardizing of a number of markets which are cash markets at this time, and in terms of the damage this might do to the other sectors of the Canadian economy.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have to interrupt the minister as we will be running short of time soon.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): The minister saw fit to mention me in his answer. Let me ask him this, is it a fact that, as stated by the premier of Saskatchewan, the minister is 90 per cent opposed to any action in this regard that would remove a great deal of wheat from the province of Saskatchewan? What is his position?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the minister may be allowed to reply, but I thought the hon. gentleman was asking for statistical information.

Mr. Pepin: I was just trying to be helpful. When the hon. member for Prince Albert went west this summer he said himself that there were major difficulties to bear in mind. I have been spelling out what the difficulties were.

Mr. Diefenbaker: How long?