

Inquiries of the Ministry

Trade and Commerce whether the government has received any information that France is offering to sell wheat to Japan at lower prices than those provided by the international grains agreement.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I read the same report in the newspaper this morning, and I have asked officials of my department to provide me with information on this subject. If France does this it would be contrary to the agreed position taken by exporters at Canberra, and we would certainly protest as strongly as we could about these matters.

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to the question posed by the hon. member for Calgary Centre. In view of this problem in respect of the dumping of grain at prices below those accepted in the international wheat agreement, will the minister indicate when a discussion can take place in this house regarding the Kennedy round agreements in order that we may debate this matter, which is costing the agricultural economy millions of dollars?

Mr. Pepin: Legislation on this subject is to be brought forward.

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, I have a question supplementary to the question put by the hon. member for Calgary Centre. Is it not a fact that France has just recently made a sale to Japan, and is there any question as to whether or not they have violated the international agreement? What is Canada doing about it?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question as asked is certainly not in order. The hon. member cannot ask the minister to verify or deny an alleged fact.

Mr. Horner: Perhaps I could word my question in a different way. What is the minister and his department doing about the recent sale by France to Japan, which many countries believe to be in violation of the international grains agreement?

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, the question begs the answer, in the sense that the hon. member admits this is the opinion of other people. It may not be the truth of the matter. As the hon. member well knows, there has been a sort of mutual accusation society around the world in recent days regarding this matter. Every country is anxious to say that it has

[Mr. Harkness.]

not violated the international grains arrangement, but I will look more deeply into this subject. My impression is that there has been no such sale, but I will find out.

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Trade and Commerce. I ask the minister whether representatives of the wheat board have recently been in Japan in order to retain that traditional market which we have had in the past.

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, I am often questioned on these matters and am always tempted to say that the House of Commons is not a market place. Obviously if the wheat board wants to sell wheat, one of the first conditions they must observe is to be rather quiet in announcing where they are going to sell wheat.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[Translation]

EXPO '67**SUGGESTED REDUCTION IN MONTREAL SHARE OF DEFICIT**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): While I have the floor, Mr. Speaker, and before I am asked to do so, I should like to answer two questions put to me yesterday by the hon. member for Sainte-Marie (Mr. Valade), who first inquired of the right hon. Prime Minister whether I had received a request from the city of Montreal to reduce its share of the Expo '67 deficit.

I have not received any such request myself.

The hon. member then asked what happens in such a case. The other day, when the Minister of Trade and Commerce of the province of Quebec was asked the same question, he answered that an agreement is an agreement, and a contract is a contract. I found that answer extremely interesting and intelligent, and I intend to support it wholeheartedly.

[English]

GRAIN**REPORTED INVESTIGATION OF SALES ABOVE QUOTAS**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Vegreville asked yesterday whether I