

Ottawa for many years with men, mines and materials. I wish to remind the *Ottawa Journal* of this fact. The world will not come to an end because of the happenings in the province of Quebec. Eganville and Canada will continue to march onward.

My question arises from the fact that more than two years ago the federal government purchased the old Eganville town hall from the corporation of the village with the intention of building a new post office on the site. The village corporation, reeve and council moved their offices to the old Eganville high school which was vacated some time ago by the local board of education as a result of the new Opeongo high school built by the county of Renfrew board of education.

The abandonment of the old town hall has resulted in the building going into a state of disrepair and neglect. The sooner the new post office is built, the better it will serve the needs of the community. When one stands and looks at the old building in its disarray and its broken windows, he is not encouraged when he is reminded that it is owned by the federal government. In fact, it would form part of a worth-while winter works program if the government did what it could this winter toward demolishing the old building and being ready to pour footings next spring for the new office. The reeve, council and people of the village are patiently waiting word from the government as to when construction will begin on the new post office, and I say to the minister through you, Mr. Speaker, the sooner the better.

Mr. P. M. Mahoney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Department of Public Works is presently planning to build a post office of approximately 2,500 square feet at Eganville. It is hoped that the more detailed planning for this post office can be proceeded with during the spring of 1971, provided sufficient funds are available for the project.

INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE—EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET AND CANADA'S AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS—DISCUSSION AT CONGRESS

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, the question I wish to discuss for a few minutes is properly noted at page 954 of *Hansard* as "Items involved in British reservation concerning application of the EEC common tariff". It arises from a supplementary question to one raised by the hon. member for Fraser Valley West (Mr. Rose) on November 5. His question arose from a statement made by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) in which the minister said he had recently made a trip to Europe to establish, as he described it, optimum channels of communication with all the parties involved—United Kingdom, the members of the European community, the new applicants and all countries concerned with the process of *élargissement*.

The hon. member for Fraser Valley West asked the minister if he could tell the House what forest products were among 12 items which the British had identified as being sensitive in the framework of the United Kingdom

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economy—items in respect of which they had some reservation as they entered into discussions with members of the European Economic Community. This subject matter is of great concern to the important forest products producing areas of British Columbia and, understandably, members of that province are concerned about the effect the latest British move toward close association with Europe will have upon the export position.

The minister was apparently unable to answer the question from memory and he indulged in one of those rather delightful, inverted ministerial phrases which make many of us enjoy his presence in the House. Most ministers would not willingly admit that they were trying to dodge an issue, but the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce said:

I was trying to dodge the issue because I am not sure which forest products were included.

Immediately afterward, some hon. members were shouting "Oh, oh" and I did not catch the minister's further reply. There was some amusement behind the scenes on the part of the members from British Columbia who sit on the same side of the House as the minister because the hon. member for Fraser Valley West and I were raising this question on November 5. I think they knew that some of us had had lunch with a delegation from the Council of Forest Industries which was in Ottawa. It was because I had knowledge of the presence of this delegation in Ottawa that I was surprised the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce did not, apparently, know the details concerning items which are of such great concern to a delegation which had come to Ottawa primarily to discuss this matter with the government as well as with some private members.

Therefore, I asked the minister whether, before attempting to make a statement in the House as suggested by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), he would visit our province and find out at first-hand just how important these products are to the economy of British Columbia in particular and, indeed, to Canada as a whole. I realize that the following day the minister did come into the House and state that plywood, wood pulp and newsprint are among the 12 sensitive items. I appreciate that he gave this information to the House on the next occasion we were sitting. I know, too, that he told us lumber was not included among the items which the British considered to be most sensitive, although he added there might be a possibility of rough-sawn lumber entering the European Economic Community free of duty when Britain joins it.

● (10:20 p.m.)

I should also like to say that not only the members of the Council of Forest Industries but also the people of British Columbia generally have good reason for concern about the impact of the British move toward Europe. As has often been said—indeed, it is almost trite in British Columbia—something like 50 cents of every dollar in the British Columbia economy arises from the harvesting and manufacture of our forest crops.