

Inquiries of the Ministry

minimum under the International Grains Arrangement. That international agreement unfortunately is not working as we would like it to.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since the government of the United States has announced that in order to meet the wheat price war it is prepared to subsidize wheat prices to United States farmers, does the Canadian government intend to subsidize our farmers for wheat delivered in the 1968-69 crop year?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, the policy of subsidizing wheat exports from the United States is long-standing and is a policy against which we have often protested because it is inimical to the interests of our western farmers. So far as our policy of assistance to western agriculture is concerned, I merely repeat what the Minister of Finance said. When that policy has been determined it will be announced.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since we have had similar replies for some months, will the Acting Prime Minister tell the house when we may expect this statement of government policy with respect to assistance to western agriculture?

An hon. Member: After parliament has risen.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, it will be necessary for the government to make decisions on some of these matters very shortly because of the opening of the new crop year.

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Calgary Centre): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, who is absent today, promised me yesterday that he would produce the schedule of prices that the Wheat Board is charging for wheat, may I ask the Acting Prime Minister if he will table this schedule?

Mr. Sharp: Yes, Mr. Speaker. As my hon. friend knows, this information is published every day and there is no difficulty in obtaining it. He can obtain it by inquiring but I will be very happy to see that it is tabled.

Mr. Harkness: Then why didn't the Minister of Trade and Commerce give it to us yesterday?

[Mr. Sharp.]

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since it has been announced that the purpose of the initiative of the United States is to restore prices under the International Grains Arrangement, is the government of Canada going to associate itself with the United States in a concerted and joint effort to restore these prices? In other words, has the government of Canada any plans to support the reported efforts of the United States to restore these prices?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, may I remind the Leader of the Opposition that it was on the initiative of Canada that the ministerial meeting was held.

Mr. Stanfield: Come, now.

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of developments which have taken place over the last few years, does the government intend to formulate selling programs that will enable us to move back into the position we occupied previously when we had 25 per cent of the International Grain Market?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, it is the aim of the Canadian Wheat Board to restore this country to that position. That is one of the reasons why the government and the Canadian Wheat Board have emphasized the importance of remaining competitive. Of course, it is our desire to be competitive at a higher price level but when our competitors lower their prices we must meet their competition.

Mr. Gleave: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since the International Grains Arrangement was negotiated under the auspices of the Kennedy round initiated under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, has the government considered asking the responsible countries to meet and review the present position of this agreement?

Mr. Sharp: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It is within the context of the Kennedy round that all these discussions have taken place. We are very much aware, as the hon. member has pointed out, that the International Grains Arrangement was an intrinsic part of the Kennedy round and that the balance of advantage has been upset because certain countries have failed to comply with that agreement. We have these factors very much in mind in all our negotiations with our customers and fellow members in the agreement.