

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Humphrys advised me by telephone this morning that he was endeavouring to get in touch with Mr. Kroeker with the intention of proceeding along the lines he indicated to me last week. When I came into the house I had not heard whether Mr. Humphrys had been successful in locating Mr. Kroeker.

[Later:]

Mr. Gene Rhéaume (Northwest Territories): My question is a supplementary addressed to the minister of health and welfare. In view of the information given to the house earlier today that Mr. Kroeker had been dismissed for making public certain views he held, would the hon. lady assure the house that those federal officials who testified before the special parliamentary committee on the Canada pension plan were not operating under the same sort of threat?

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Minister of National Health and Welfare): I disagree with what the hon. member has said. There was no suggestion from my colleague the Minister of Finance that this man was being relieved of his responsibilities because of what he said. It was because, being a civil servant, in the course of his position he said something which was contemptuous of parliament.

GRAIN**WHEAT—INQUIRY AS TO REPORTED SPEECH BY TRADE MINISTER**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce regarding a speech he made on Wednesday of last week, February 24, in Winnipeg. Is the newspaper report on that speech a fair comment, particularly its opening paragraph which reads as follows:

Trade and commerce minister Mitchell Sharp last night rejected demands that the government guarantee wheat prices to the farmers and subsidize exports.

May I ask the minister whether that is a fair summation of the presentation he made?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I am sure you recognize that this is a gross violation of the rules in respect of questions. My speech speaks for itself, and I cannot really comment on the interpretation placed on it.

Mr. Douglas: Mr. Speaker, may I then direct the minister's attention to several specific things he said during his speech, and I refer to the following:

[Mr. Gordon.]

It has been proposed that the price to the producer should be fixed above the market and that the wheat board should sell at a loss. It has also been proposed that exports should be subsidized.

Later in the same speech the minister said:

We, therefore, do not intend to adopt any policies that will interfere with the efficient operation of this producers' marketing agency or reduce the board's incentive to go after markets on behalf of producers.

I should like to ask the minister whether that means the government is now definitely abandoning any idea of fixing or guaranteeing minimum prices for wheat.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I believe my speech speaks for itself, and I might say that I tried to make it as clear as possible. It was made with the full knowledge and approval of the Prime Minister, and it does express government policy.

[Later:]

Mr. Reynold Rapp (Humboldt-Melfort-Tisdale): My question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce really is supplementary to the question asked by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam, and is in connection with the price of wheat. It has been stated that the Saskatchewan legislature passed a resolution asking the federal government to establish a two price system. What was the reply the minister gave to the Saskatchewan government in so far as this resolution is concerned, and would the minister be prepared to table the answer he gave?

Mr. Sharp: The answer is very simple. I have not yet given a reply.

UNITED NATIONS**CANADIAN MEMBERSHIP ON COMMITTEE CONSIDERING FINANCIAL POSITION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Certain press articles would indicate that Canada is one of a number of nations that have been asked to serve on a special committee to investigate the financial policies of the United Nations as they apply to those nations which are not actually sharing in the cost of the peace keeping operations of that world organization. Can the minister signify whether Canada has accepted that invitation, and indicate what Canada's policy is in regard to its participation?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, Canada has