

try in British Columbia which is being affected in a very harsh economic fashion by cheap imports from the United States. British Columbia producers have lowered their price twice. Potato shippers in the United States have met that competition. We feel they are now dumping potatoes in Canada, and we have already started an investigation.

AMOUNT OF CROSS-BORDER TRADE IN POTATOES

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister what action he thinks should be taken with regard to potatoes which are coming into Canada, not only in British Columbia, but which will be and perhaps are now coming from all parts of the United States, as they come season by season to supply the Canadian potato market until such time as the Windsor area begins to produce potatoes in Canada.

The market movement of potatoes into Canada in the last ten years has shown that, pound for pound, we have imported more than we have exported. What case is the Minister prepared to present to show that this is in fact a seasonal exchange of product that they, in dollar terms, and usually in weight terms, have an advantage in their marketing in Canada versus our marketing in the United States? Will that bear no weight in their ultimate decision or in the presentation which the minister will make to the U.S. Government?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member knows full well what the voice for the potato producers of Canada has said at the annual meeting held recently in Ottawa. I refer to the Canadian Horticultural Council. Their motion, in very simple terms says "You in the United States produce enough potatoes for yourself, we in Canada produce enough potatoes for ourself; you keep yours, and we will keep ours". That, in very plain terminology, is what it amounts to. That was the voice for the potato producers in Canada. We work very close with them in what they are suggesting.

I met with the western potato producers in Winnipeg. I met a delegation here when they were attending the Canadian Horticultural Council meeting. They are meeting today and tomorrow in the United States with potato producers from the northwestern United States. There will be representatives from all of Canada there to decide how to work out a better trading program among themselves.

● (1420)

POTATO INDUSTRY INQUIRY

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. Since we had committed ourselves some three years ago to an inquiry into the potato industry in Canada, why has that not been done and why is it that our potato industry is now being investigated by Americans south of the border, who seem to want to investigate every aspect of Canadian economic activities these days? Why are we not investigating the Canadian potato industry here in Canada?

Oral Questions

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member knows that there have been several hearings taking place in Canada about potato marketing. If the Hon. Member is suggesting a Royal Commission—and I heard applause from the other side, yet they always condemn these Royal Commissions—I do not believe a Royal Commission is appropriate, but there have been hearings and decisions have been made. The National Farm Products Marketing Council has held hearings on potato marketing, on how it should be helped. That is why they are recommending the kind of a marketing system which is wanted. It has been endorsed by Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and, Madam Speaker, is being endorsed by the western Provinces. The western Provinces say they are ready to move faster than the eastern Provinces on this very similar kind of condition.

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NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS

PROPOSED TESTING OF CRUISE MISSILE

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Both he and the Secretary of State for External Affairs stated last week, and earlier this week, that the Cruise testing would be looked at in light of progress made at the Geneva talks, and also that declining to test the Cruise would not be a breach of any of our commitments. He said that the day before yesterday in the House. Last evening, at his dinner for U.S. Vice-President Bush, the Prime Minister not only did not make any connection between testing and progress of the talks at Geneva but, even more seriously, he said that refusing to test would in fact be a breach of some of our commitments. Which of the Prime Minister's statements is the Canadian public to believe?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I repeat that when I said there would be no breach of any commitment, that is the only thing I could say, because there has been no commitment. I believe that has been made clear repeatedly in the House. The Hon. Member says I said last night that there had been a commitment. I should like to know where and how I said that. If she has any text, I would be happy to hear it from her.

CANADIAN COMMITMENT TO NATO

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister clearly wants to have the public continue in a state of absolute and complete confusion on this subject. He said last night that we would not be in breach of any commitment if we tested the Cruise. What I am asking him is how does that square with him saying that we would be—I am sorry, he said that we would be in breach of our commitment—