

Inquiries of the Ministry

POLICY RESPECTING OPENING OF NEW EMBASSIES

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): My question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Does the recent opening of a Canadian embassy in Algeria represent a change in policy by the government, which was formerly directed toward reducing Canadian representation in foreign countries?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): There has been no further reduction in representation in foreign countries, and a gradual increase in the number of new missions which have been opened since that time. I think we are in a much stronger position to proceed with openings after having closed some of marginal importance.

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GRAIN

REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION OF PLAN FOR
RATIONALIZATION OF HANDLING AND
TRANSPORTATION

Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the fact the railway companies have had access for some time to the proposed plans for the rationalization of grain handling and transportation, which I understand is now in cabinet, can the minister say when the proposed plan will be made available to the prairie governments, Members of Parliament, and all farm organizations in order that they will also have the privilege of seeing what the plan is all about?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): I will take notice of the question, Mr. Speaker.

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AGRICULTURE

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR CORN STORAGE
FACILITIES

Mr. R. E. McKinley (Huron): I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the low prices corn producers have been receiving this year, which the minister said are partly due to lack of storage facilities, is the government giving consideration to the representations which I understand have been made to it for assistance in regard to corn storage facilities, and how soon will a program be announced?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): I am not sure how soon we can announce the program, but the hon. member has accurately described the situation in that we are giving urgent consideration to some proposals that would increase the amount of storage before the next crop comes in. I can also advise the hon. member that corn has moved up about 14 cents a bushel in the last few days.

Mr. McKinley: Can the minister say whether the assistance for corn storage will be for commercial corn storage or on the farm?

[Mr. Sharp.]

Mr. Olson: Certainly it would be to increase on-farm storage, but we are hopeful we can find a satisfactory way of increasing commercial storage as well.

Mr. William Knowles (Norfolk-Haldimand): One of the programs suggested was accelerated depreciation for on-farm storage. Would the minister give consideration to the same plan for commercial storage designated specifically for use by farmers?

Mr. Olson: That is one of the proposals under consideration.

[Later:]

CORN—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON MEASURES TO
RELIEVE PRODUCERS' DIFFICULTIES

Mr. H. W. Danforth (Kent-Essex): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Agriculture. In light of the very great difficulties experienced by Canadian corn producers during this year's harvest season and in light of various reports that have been made to the government in this regard, can the minister indicate when he will be able to make a statement in the House with regard to government policy and a solution to this very grievous problem?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot, but I can advise that only last week I had a further representation from the Ontario Grain and Feed Dealers Association—the people who operate some of the commercial elevators in Ontario. There were some new and interesting proposals that we have only had for a few days.

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GRAIN

SUGGESTED MEETING OF INTERNATIONAL GRAINS
ARRANGEMENT SIGNATORIES TO ACHIEVE ORDERLY
INTERNATIONAL PRICING OF WHEAT

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): In view of the statement made by the minister in charge of the Wheat Board during his trip to Australia that Australia and Canada have agreed that the international pricing of wheat should be done on an orderly basis within a fixed price range, is it the intention of the minister or the government to ask the International Wheat Council to press for a meeting of the signatories of the International Grains Arrangement to achieve this objective?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): I am sure the hon. member is aware of the fact that within the last few days a meeting of the council was held in London. He has no doubt read the press reports relating to that matter. On an ongoing basis Canada has always indicated interest in international commodity agreements of this nature but of course they are only useful as long as they are adhered to.

● (2:50 p.m.)