

GRAIN

FEED GRAIN—ESTABLISHMENT OF PRICES BASED ON OFF-BOARD SURVEY

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board arising out of his statement in the House on September 14. The minister stated at that time that monitoring of off-board prices for feed grain on the Prairies would be carried out by Agriculture Canada under the authority of the Agricultural Products Board and the results would then be supplied to the Wheat Board and to the Canadian Livestock Feed Board for their use in determining sale prices to purchasers. Will the minister inform the House whether the survey has been completed and if, as a result, grain prices have been established by the Canadian Wheat Board?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, a second such survey has taken place. The first survey was used to test the techniques which were being applied. The Wheat Board is in the final stages of determining the price basis upon which sales of grain will be made to users of grain throughout Canada.

Mr. Gleave: Can the minister inform the House if the present prices at which feed wheat and feed barley are being sold to feeders and feed mills in eastern and western Canada are based on the monitored prices as described in the statement of September 14, and will he tell us what those prices are for utility wheat and feed barley?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the prices in effect at the moment continue to be the so-called corn competitive prices established by the Canadian Wheat Board in line with its past practices. As I indicated in my previous answer, the first price based on off-board prices is in the final stages of being determined and will be put into effect as soon as the mechanics for that placing into effect are available.

Mr. Gleave: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar for a last supplementary, then the hon. member for Lisgar who has a supplementary, and then the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Gleave: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister a further supplementary question. I must assume that off-board prices are not the base, as he said. Is grain being sold within Wheat Board designated areas at non-board grain prices in western Canada as well as in eastern Canada and British Columbia?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the Wheat Board is continuing its practice of using its Thunder Bay price base for the sale of grain into eastern Canada and western Canada. That practice, which is long established, is continuing.

WHEAT AND BARLEY—POSSIBILITY OF INCREASE IN INITIAL PRICES

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the minister responsible for the

Oral Questions

Wheat Board. Since the Wheat Board has stated that it expects the final payment for wheat will be \$4.92 and it is now paying an initial price of \$2.25, may I ask the minister whether the government is going to increase the initial price for all grades of wheat and barley delivered to the Wheat Board and, if so, when does it intend to do so?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, consideration is not being given to a further change in the initial prices, which were changed, I should remind hon. members, on July 31, having been originally set for the year in March. However, there is provision in the Wheat Board Act for the Canadian Wheat Board at some point to recommend that an interim payment be made. There is significant pressure from farmers on the board to withhold such recommendation until January 1 so that any such payment may fall into the new tax year rather than the present tax year.

* * *

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE INCREASE—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT ACTION

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Finance who has conceded that he is startled by the upward movement in the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, particularly this month and in recent months as well. He has refused to present a budget. Will he give the House the assurance that he proposes to do something about this? Can he assure the House that at the beginning of next week he will present the House with a statement incorporating some positive measures that he intends to take to offset this upward trend in unemployment inasmuch as he had all along expected unemployment to fall off during the year as a result of his budget measures?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, in absolute terms unemployment is down over a point since this time last year. In terms of new jobs this reveals an economy expanding at close to capacity. I want to say to the hon. gentleman that if the indicators were to change in such a way as to justify further expansionary measures, of course I would consider them. At the moment the economy is expanding at a close to capacity rate.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, since the minister will give me no assurance regarding the statement for which I have asked, will he give us a statement showing how he has managed to accomplish achieving a rate of inflation of 8½ per cent associated with a seasonally adjusted rate of unemployment of 6 per cent?