

I might point out to the hon. gentleman that one of the reasons our aid sometimes lags behind appropriations is that it does not lapse at the end of the year, whereas some other contributing countries insist that the money be used during the year. Since we have been concentrating on development we had allowed the amounts to accumulate, and sometimes they are not expended as rapidly as would otherwise be the case. With regard to aid in the form of wheat, if there are people who need our wheat I can assure the hon. member that we will be only too happy to increase our appropriation in this respect.

Mr. Lewis: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would suggest that we move on to another subject. There is only a short time left in the question period and several hon. members wish to ask questions. If there is time at the end of the question period we might return to this very important matter.

AGRICULTURE

QUEBEC—HAIL AND RAIN DAMAGE SUFFERED BY MARKET GARDENERS AND APPLE GROWERS

Mr. Walter Smith (Saint-Jean): With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Agriculture through his parliamentary secretary.

[*Translation*]

Would the Minister of Agriculture have received a telegram from the Association of truck gardeners of the Montreal area in connection with damages incurred through hail and rain in the Sherrington, Saint-Michel and Ville-Laval areas? Would he also have received one from the Hemmingford and Covey Hill apple growers?

Mr. Florian Côté (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question as asked is out of order. The hon. member cannot ask simply whether a telegram or a message has been received. In that sense, the question is out of order. On the other hand, the Chair will perhaps allow the Parliamentary Secretary to answer the question of the hon. member.

Mr. Côté: Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of the week, when the hon. members for Saint-Jean, Laval and Laprairie (Messrs. Smith, Roy and Watson) made representations in this

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regard, we had not received that telegram. However, we have received the telegram since then.

In general, the problem of crops damaged by bad weather is entirely one for the provinces and, in the past, when the provincial authorities could not cope financially with the damages caused by bad weather, they would ask the federal government for help.

But in the last few years, the federal government has established crop insurance and has granted close to \$1,200,000 to the province of Quebec.

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I would like—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I believe I have already shown a certain generosity by allowing the question. The hon. member might want to continue discussing it at the time of adjournment, if there is urgency, as he seems to suggest.

[*English*]

INDIAN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENTAL POLICY—ATTITUDE OF PROVINCIAL INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In view of the recent announcement that representatives of British Columbia Indians would not meet the minister, will the minister advise the house as to the number of provincial Indian associations that have taken a similar stand toward his new policy?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would think the hon. member is asking for the type of information which would normally be asked for in written form. However, the house may want the minister to reply.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I am just back from British Columbia where I met many Indian chiefs. I put myself at the disposal of those who wanted to talk with me and most of them were quite reasonable. They discussed the Indian policy and I think that Indians are now interested in examining it. If they have alternate proposals to make, we shall be pleased to consider them.

[*English*]

Mr. Thompson: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister