

*Inquiries of the Ministry***AGRICULTURE****INQUIRY AS TO ASSISTANCE TO WESTERN FARMERS**

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister without Portfolio from the province of Saskatchewan, in view of the fact that he made some observations a few minutes ago and apparently is looking after this side of the question. Will he say whether, in view of—and I do not think I overstate the situation in saying this—the devastation on the prairies, consideration is being given by the government to bringing in acreage payments for the small farmers? Second, will he add to the observations he has already made regarding the nature of action to be taken in so far as marketable wheat is concerned; that is, wheat that is damp and will not be saleable unless action is taken?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The right hon. gentleman asked the question of the minister in his alleged responsibility as minister from Saskatchewan. I have suggested to hon. members in the past, rightly or wrongly, that it is not in accordance with the rules to ask questions in this way. The right hon. gentleman referred to the fact that the minister spoke before, but my understanding was that he was speaking on the point of order. I would think this question should be answered by the responsible minister, or the minister who has administrative responsibility.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Then I direct my question to a minister who can be described as responsible—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker:—that is, the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am sure all the ministers on this side of the house would fit into that category.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Baldwin: Speak for yourself.

Mr. Olson: In direct response to the right hon. gentleman's question I would say that everyone in this house, and particularly members from western Canada, know there is no assistance program that is equal, or even near equal, to the farmer being able to harvest a good crop in good condition. However,

Mr. Speaker: Order. I doubt very much that the question is in order because the hon. member is referring to something that has already happened.

Mr. Valade: I will rephrase my question, Mr. Speaker.

What measures does the minister intend to take in order to let the people, the intermediate bodies and the men in public life know when and where those public meetings will be held?

[*English*]

Mr. Hellyer: Mr. Speaker, public notice is given by newspaper advertisements. In addition we often send letters to organizations which we feel will be particularly interested in the subject.

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister indicate to the house whether his task force on housing will return to Montreal, in view of the fact that they spent only two days there and three days in Toronto?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

FINANCE**CONSULTATIONS RESPECTING PROPOSED SECURITIES COMMISSION**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Will the minister advise the house whether the government has given consideration to the establishment of a national securities commission, in line with the request from a number of provinces and of several responsible financial bodies in the country?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, for some time I have been very actively engaged in the preparation of a federal position on a national securities administration. There will be a meeting on Friday, as I have answered in written questions, of the continuing committee of officials on financial institutions, to discuss this matter.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister in a position to indicate when a decision may be reached and announced?

Mr. Basford: Mr. Speaker, we have decided to introduce in this session of parliament a securities act, which we will be discussing with the provincial officials on Friday.