

Inquiries of the Ministry

of the House and bring with him the true biography so that Canadians will be reassured, that under his leadership of Information Canada objective reports and objective information will be available to the Canadian people?

Mr. Sharp: I thank the right hon. gentleman for his tribute to the efficiency of the Post Office. It came at a most opportune time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sharp: On the question that has been raised, I do not share the view that the reputation of this gentleman is being questioned in the way that he has questioned it in the House today.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I ask the minister whether he has received a letter setting out in detail a series of events which if true, are a denial of that objectivity and responsibility that the person heading Information Canada should have?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is no. I have not received any such report. I understand that the gentleman in question is appearing before one of the House committees today.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Will he be bringing with him his biographical record?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

AGRICULTURE**FARM MACHINERY—REDUCTION IN PRICES FOLLOWING BARBER COMMISSION REPORT—VOLUME OF IMPORTS**

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the findings of the Barber Commission that farm machinery costs in Canada are excessive and since recent reports show that farm machinery sales have dropped sharply, 17 per cent in the first three months of this year, is the minister or his department conducting any surveys to determine if tractor and combine prices have been reduced since the Barber report was received?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I will check to see whether we have any later statistics respecting the prices and the percentage of list prices paid by the farmers in the three-month period referred to by the hon. member compared with other periods examined by the task force.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Mr. Gleave: A supplementary question. Can the minister inform the House as to the increase in imports of farm machinery which I understood was to be the government's main attack on farm machinery prices? Have imports increased since the report of the commission?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the minister might reply to the question briefly. He should not go into detail. I have the impression the hon. member is asking for statistical information. To that extent the question could not be in order, but the minister should be allowed to reply briefly.

Mr. Olson: I will not mention any statistics, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member must realize that the imports of tractors and combines that I referred to were so that there would be greater and more real competition amongst farm machinery companies, not amongst dealers. Obviously a small number of pieces of this kind of equipment have to be brought into the country in the initial stages for testing to determine whether they are acceptable for the purposes of the Canadian farmers.

FARM MACHINERY—IMPLEMENTATION OF BARBER COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): I have a supplementary question for the minister of Agriculture. Would the minister state briefly which of the recommendations of the Barber Commission have been implemented at the present time and which are in the process of being implemented?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Yes, Mr. Speaker. All the recommendations except the one dealing with the reverse dumping duty are at the point where some progress has been made.

AVAILABILITY OF REPAIR PARTS FOR IMPORTED TRACTORS

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the minister of something that has come to my attention on two occasions in the last three days, namely, that on tractors imported into Canada it was understood that the needed supply of parts would be available. That undertaking has not been maintained. In the importation of these tractors into this country will the minister see that there is an assurance to those who purchase them that they will be able to secure the necessary parts?