

## GRAIN

## WHEAT—ACREAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM—ESTIMATED SUMMERFALLOW ACREAGE

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister without Portfolio, the hon. member for Saskatoon-Humboldt, whether as a result of examinations which have been made in the western provinces he can advise the House of his department's latest estimate made three or four days ago as to the number of millions of acres that will be taken out of production this year and put into summerfallow?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister without Portfolio):** Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge no authoritative estimate has been made in connection with the number of acres to be taken out. Of course, many people have been furnishing their own guesses on the matter. However, there has been no statistical survey.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I am not asking for "guesstimates", Mr. Speaker. The minister says that the departmental officials have not made any estimate on the basis of the seeding done to date, and the general reaction of the people. Is that the answer he is giving to the House?

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for—

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. The minister made a statement that bears striking resemblance to a statement he made a few days ago in this House. Does the minister say that an estimate has not been made in his department?

**Mr. McIlraith:** That is not what you are asking.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** It is so.

**Mr. Lang:** On the question of privilege, I do not think I have anything to add to my previous answer.

## FINANCE

## TARIFF ADJUSTMENTS TO OFFSET FOREIGN COMPETITION WITH CERTAIN INDUSTRIES

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. On April 28, four weeks ago, I asked the minister if the government would give consideration to its tariff policies as they apply to imports of footwear and electrical goods from low-wage countries such as Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and others where

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wage scales are so low that Canadians cannot compete with these conditions. This situation is causing mass lay-offs in these Canadian industries. The minister was kind enough to say that the government expected to make an announcement on this very soon. I checked the words "very soon" in his answer. Has "very soon" now arrived?

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, an announcement was made in one particular field, the textile area. The other areas are under continuing study.

**Mr. Hees:** A supplementary question. I ask the minister when "very soon" will arrive? When can we expect an answer to be given regarding these two industries?

**Mr. Benson:** Very soon, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Hees:** What in the world is very soon? Is it like the four years the minister has taken to fight inflation?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The end of the question period is coming very soon.

**Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West):** A supplementary question to the Minister of Finance. Can the minister state whether the Prime Minister intends to discuss with the Prime Minister of Singapore the subject of imports from lower-cost countries so that bona fide Canadian importers will not be caught in the crunch of sudden government action by Order in Council imposing surcharges?

**Mr. Benson:** I do not think that is on the Prime Minister's agenda. Of course I do not know exactly what he will be talking about with various people, but I do not believe it is on the agenda.

## INDIAN AFFAIRS

## LOWERING OF VOTING AGE TO 18 IN BAND ELECTIONS

**Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena):** I wish to direct a question to the very youthful Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Now that the government has endorsed the concept of lowering the voting age to 18 in federal elections, will the minister take steps to ensure that this very beneficial action will also apply to native Indian electors on reserves in the election of band councils?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** I am considering that matter right now. I have