

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Winch:** I am prompted to ask that question because I believe we are in position to make a contribution.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Winch:** It is funny, but we hear "order" called when anything has to do with Great Britain.

[Later:]

## UNITED NATIONS—INQUIRY AS TO LOAN FOR CLEARING OF SUEZ CANAL

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Michael Starr (Ontario):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Finance now has the information to answer my question which I asked the other day with regard to the loan to the United Nations for the clearing of the Suez canal?

**Hon. W. E. Harris (Minister of Finance):** The \$1 million was paid over to the United Nations on February 22.

[Later:]

## ALLEGED FAILURE OF "READER'S DIGEST" TO PAY EXCISE TAX

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Finance arising out of a report in the *Winnipeg Free Press*. Has *Reader's Digest* failed to make the payment of the tax levied against it under the legislation passed last year providing for a special excise tax on advertising in non-Canadian periodicals? If so, what course of action does the government propose to take in connection with this matter?

**Hon. W. E. Harris (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I think this is more properly a question that should be directed to the Minister of National Revenue, but I think I can answer by saying I do not believe a tax has been assessed yet and until that time has come one would not expect any further action.

**Mr. Knowles:** May I ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has *Reader's Digest* failed to take out the licence required under the regulations passed under the act and has it failed to pay the \$5,000 deposit also required by the government's regulations?

**Hon. J. J. McCann (Minister of National Revenue):** Well, Mr. Speaker, I cannot give definite answers as to whether or not the licence has been taken out. A licence is required. It is the policy of the department to collect all outstanding debts.

[Mr. Harris.]

## LIVESTOCK

## HOGS—STATEMENT ON REASON FOR DROP IN PRICE

**Right Hon. J. G. Gardiner (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, two days ago the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue) asked me to make inquiry with regard to hog prices. In view of the rulings you have made in the last two days, and in view of the length of the statement, I think I should make it now rather than wait until question time.

Hog prices are usually influenced by a variety of conditions rather than any one particular factor. During recent months the major factors influencing the level of hog prices have been the supply position—hog marketings to date this year are 12 per cent below a year ago—and the embargo against the importation of United States pork by reason of disease conditions in that country. As a result of these two conditions, plus the fact that, as at January 1, storage stocks were over 9,500,000 pounds below January 1 a year ago, hog prices in Canada have been substantially higher than during the first two months of 1956.

In January this year the price for A grade hogs at Toronto averaged \$31.64 as compared with \$23.47 for January a year ago. In February, A grade hogs in Toronto averaged \$33.45 as compared with \$23.51 a year ago. Hog prices in Canada have also been substantially higher than the United States. The average price for choice barrows and gilts, 200-220, Chicago, dressed weight equivalent, was approximately \$24.20 in January as compared with \$31.64 for A grade hogs in Toronto and \$23.60 for February as compared with \$33.45 in Toronto.

By reason of the relatively short position in supplies, hog prices progressively advanced from \$31.33 during the week of January 5 this year at Toronto to average \$34.13 during the week of February 16. During the week ending March 2, hog prices declined at all markets in Canada, and the average price for the week at Toronto was \$31.25 with a low at the end of the week of \$30.50.

This decline in hog prices may be attributed to the fact that hog prices had progressively advanced to a point where at Toronto they were over \$11 per hundred, dressed weight equivalent, higher than Chicago, and were also relatively higher than other meats, particularly beef. Other contributing factors might be the approach of the lenten season and the fact that during the week of February 16 hog marketings in Canada totalled 120,028, 10 per cent higher than the marketings of 109,150 during the same week in 1956.