

energy. For example, one pound of fertilizer requires 60,000 Btu's, and one pound of steel requires 20,000 Btu's. I am told there may be a shortage of nitrogen, especially in British Columbia where the government of the province saw fit to raise the price of natural gas to the industrial consumer by 81 per cent. These things have to be taken into consideration. There are other forms of nitrogen. If there is a shortage of anhydrous, other forms will be available.

Mr. Murta: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order in connection with the answers given by the Minister of Agriculture. They were specifically non-answers. I believe the minister does not have the information.

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Murta: The minister is not aware of what is going on in connection with the shortage of fertilizer for the agricultural industry.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would point out that that is not a point of order but a point of debate. If hon. members want the Chair to recognize the Minister of Agriculture to reply to the hon. member's point of order I will do so, but I am not sure what that will accomplish.

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of order, I challenge anyone to prove that this Minister of Agriculture has not had more conferences and deliberations with the fertilizer industry of this country in the past year than anybody in Canada and has gathered more information re the fertilizer supply situation than ever before.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whelan: It is obvious to me that the hon. member knows a lot less about the real fertilizer situation in this country than the false one.

GOVERNMENT ACTION TO STABILIZE PRICE OF
FERTILIZERS AND ENSURE ADEQUACY OF SUPPLY

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the minister's familiarity with fertilizer and all aspects of the problem, will he inform the House whether he is taking any action to deal with the inflated price across the border, that is being made available to Canadian manufacturers of fertilizer, a price that is attracting more and more Canadian production; and what action is he taking to ensure adequate supplies for Canadian farmers?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): In reply to the hon. member's question, Mr. Speaker, I said a week ago that I hoped to present to the House a document or paper on the actual position of fertilizer manufacturing and the potential production in this country. I intend to do that. As far as I am concerned, what the hon. member has said is erroneous. We know that the manufacture and distribution of fertilizer is now greater in Canada than ever before. These plants were built in the first instance because of export demand. They could not have operated

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without exports. This government has taken action in the past to guarantee that when products are needed by Canadians they will be available.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

INCREASE IN PRICE OF SUGAR—NEGOTIATIONS FOR
WORLD AGREEMENT

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I think we have had enough fertilizer for now. My question is for the Minister of Finance or whichever minister is responsible. In view of the recent statement of the vice-president of Redpath Sugar Limited that the rise in the wholesale price of sugar of \$1.15 a hundredweight reflects a jump in world sugar prices on the London commodity market, can the minister tell the House if any negotiations are in progress for a world sugar agreement?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, there have been negotiations with regard to a world sugar agreement. Those negotiations were not successful and efforts are being made to get negotiations under way again. That is the current situation.

Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver Kingsway): I was afraid I would get that kind of answer. I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. What plans has the minister, in the meantime, to protect the Canadian consumer from the effects of this assault on one of the basic elements in the Canadian diet?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker—

Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver Kingsway): I am sorry. I had better put it again.

Mr. Gray: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I believe the question has not been entirely asked. The hon. member will be given an extra few moments to complete the question.

Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver Kingsway): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pending a world sugar agreement, what plans has the minister to protect the Canadian consumer from the effects of this assault on one of the basic elements in the Canadian diet?

Mr. Gray: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for that useful question. I have been consulting on this matter with my colleagues, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!