

*Inquiries of the Ministry***LIVESTOCK**REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF STATEMENT
BY MINISTER

On the orders of the day:

Mr. E. G. McCullough (Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Could the minister clarify his meaning when speaking to the dairy council on September 9, 1957, when in dealing with the curtailment of wheat acreage he said in part:

The acreage released from wheat growing might be more suitably utilized for fodder crops to support an increased number of livestock.

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I am greatly flattered by the attention the hon. member for Moose Mountain has given to my speech delivered in Winnipeg.

Mr. McCullough: I may tell the minister that I have read his speech and that I am still inclined to believe he was advocating an increase in livestock production.

Mr. Churchill: The hon. member, having read my speech, has profited accordingly and is now much better informed about the situation in western Canada.

Mr. Pickersgill: Not much better.

Mr. Churchill: Oh, yes. Two days ago, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member used these words, as reported at page 951 of *Hansard*, and he was speaking to me or about me:

I refer to the statement he made in Winnipeg suggesting to farmers that they go into livestock production, thereby using up a lot of surplus wheat.

I said he did not have his facts correct, nor did he. I made no such suggestion. I made no proposal that that be done. I did not say that this was a way to use up surplus wheat. If I may have your permission, Mr. Speaker, I will read the paragraph which seems to offend the hon. member and his colleagues sitting beside him.

Mr. Coldwell: Read the whole paragraph.

Mr. Churchill: I will not read the whole speech, but there are 39 paragraphs devoted to the wheat problem in western Canada. Paragraph 22 which was elevated by someone who was reporting the speech into a headline about "cattle rather than wheat" or something like that, caused some hon. members, having read only the headlines, to comment accordingly. Here is the paragraph. If this is a proposal—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Coldwell: Read the paragraph.

[Mr. Nowlan.]

Mr. Churchill: The paragraph reads as follows:

The long-range view with regard to our wheat entails a forward-looking policy with regard to general production, and it may well be that progressively over the years—

I draw your attention to that phrase "it may well be".

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Argue: This is the withdrawal.

Mr. Pickersgill: Just pie in the sky.

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would ask you to remind the Minister of Trade and Commerce of standing order 39. Then perhaps he will answer the question as the hon. member placed it before him.

Mr. Churchill: I have been asked to clarify the situation, and I can only do so by reading the actual words and giving a little explanation—

An hon. Member: No comments.

Mr. Fleming: How about letting him read without interruption?

Mr. Speaker: Well, if the hon. minister will proceed to read the quotation.

Mr. Churchill: At the moment I might direct my hon. friend's attention to—

Mr. Gardiner: No comments; it will not do you any good.

An hon. Member: Read the paragraph.

Mr. Churchill: I will read the paragraph if I have the opportunity of explaining some of these remarks that have been made by hon. members opposite—

Some hon. Members: Oh, no.

Mr. Churchill: I got as far as:

. . . it may well be that progressively over the years our acreage devoted solely to the growing of wheat should be appreciably reduced and greater emphasis should be placed on diversified crops and on the livestock industry.

Mr. Coldwell: Read the next sentence.

Mr. Churchill: I will read the next sentence. The interprovincial farm union brief presented to us this summer mentions reduced acreage on four occasions. However, I will read first the next sentence:

If this is done, wheat production—

You see, I did not advocate that it should be done—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.