

Inquiries of the Ministry

TRADE

WHEAT—NEGOTIATIONS RESPECTING SALES
TO CHINA AND RUSSIA

On the orders of the day:

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport will the Prime Minister tell the house when negotiations will commence in regard to sales of wheat to China and Russia?

Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Trade and Commerce will be in the house on one of the following days.

Mr. Gleave: Will the Prime Minister also ask the minister to make a statement on motions as to the outcome of the recent deliberations of the international wheat council in regard to maintenance of minimum prices under the international grains arrangement?

Mr. Trudeau: I would prefer to let the hon. member ask the minister.

[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NIGERIA—SALE OF ARMS BY GREAT BRITAIN

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Bernard Dumont (Frontenac): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Could he tell us whether his government has made representations to Great Britain asking her to stop its sales of offensive weapons to the federal Nigerian troops?

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister answered the same question the other day.

[Translation]

Mr. Dumont: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Has the minister protested to Russia against the sale of offensive weapons to Nigerian troops?

[English]

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, this question was also answered by the Prime Minister.

[Mr. Mather.]

HEALTH AND WELFARE

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICES—DISPENSING OF
DRUGS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, what action does the Minister of National Health and Welfare plan to improve drug dispensing to Indians, in view of the very inadequate knowledge exhibited by these people on a television program last Sunday night?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in a statement I made earlier in the house, this whole program is under review. More resources are being made available for the dispensing of drugs to Indians, and we hope the situation will improve in the future.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, does the minister have cause now to reflect on the assurance he gave in the house on October 2 that lay dispensers are operating only under the effective direction of qualified nurses with whom they can be in easy communication?

Mr. Munro: Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition will check my statement I am sure he will realize I did not say that. I did say that lay dispensers were to be ministers' wives, certain Indians, and school teachers as well as nurses. That was clearly my statement. I also indicated that in some of these isolated communities where there are very few people the quality of these services being provided to Indians are not even made available to white communities, in similar circumstances, so there can be no suggestion of discrimination. I might add that the services in this regard are often superior to those offered other people in some communities.

We are looking into the allegation on Sunday night to the effect that there were lay dispensers who could not even read, to which I believe the Leader of the Opposition has referred. The dispensing program has been going on for about 50 years and in the overall picture it is working out very well.

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, in order to arrest the deaths and suffering now occurring will the minister introduce special emergency measures to improve the lay dispensers program while this review is in progress?

Mr. Munro: We are both extending and improving this program at the same time.