

Thursday, March 6, 1947

The house met at three o'clock.

INDIAN AFFAIRS**CONCURRENCE IN FIRST REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE**

Mr. D. F. BROWN (Essex West) presented the first report of the joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons to continue and complete consideration and examination of the Indian Act, and moved that the report be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

PRICE CONTROL**MILK, BUTTER AND SUGAR—REFERENCE TO PRESS REPORT AS TO PROBABLE PRICE INCREASES**

On the orders of the day.

Mr. STANLEY KNOWLES (Winnipeg North Centre): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. In view of the report in today's *Montreal Gazette* that retail prices of milk, butter and sugar are soon to go up, will he assure the house that no such increases will be allowed until the subject of price control has been discussed in the house?

Hon. DOUGLAS ABBOTT (Minister of Finance): I did not catch the last part of my hon. friend's remark, but I saw the statement in the *Gazette*. It is the usual newspaper comment, and I have no comment to offer with regard to what has been said there.

Mr. COLDWELL: The last part of the question asked by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre was: Will the minister assure the house that these price increases will not go into effect pending discussion of price control in the house?

Mr. ABBOTT: No; I cannot give any such assurance. I am not of course suggesting that the price increases will go into effect. I answered my hon. friend the other day and said that the matter of price increases was one of government policy which would be announced at the appropriate time. But I can give no assurance that no price increases will go into effect until the general policy has been discussed.

Mr. KNOWLES: It is a matter which is of great concern to the people of Canada.

NAILS**REFERENCE TO STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON MARCH 4**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. HAROLD W. TIMMINS (Parkdale): Having regard to the statement which the

Minister of Reconstruction and Supply made on March 4 to the effect that he "had not heard of a shortage of nails in any part of Canada during the past two months", is the minister not aware that in the Toronto area the shortage is so acute that the builders cannot complete the houses started in 1946, and will he make a statement in regard to the matter?

Mr. GRAYDON: Is the minister not going to answer?

Mr. CHEVRIER: The question is clearly out of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is a lengthy question, and I would ask the hon. member to put it on the order paper.

Mr. GRAYDON: I submit that it is a very urgent matter.

PRIVILEGE**MR. ROSS (SOURIS)—VETERANS' HOUSES—COST PLUS CONTRACTS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. A. ROSS (Souris): On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon at page 1040 of *Hansard* the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Mackenzie) said:

... I shall say a word or two at once in reply to the statement just made by the hon. member for Souris (Mr. Ross) ...

Last evening my hon. friend referred to a cost plus contract, to which I shall refer in a moment. These, however, were not cost plus contracts ...

According to the minutes of the proceedings of evidence before the special committee on veterans affairs on June 3, 1946, in reply to a question I asked, Mr. Murchison, director of Veterans' Land Act, stated that the great majority of these houses were built on a cost plus basis; that some 2,551 housing units, out of the lot, were on a cost plus basis in seven provinces of the dominion. If I may be permitted to do so I should like to refer to that evidence, to establish my point:

By Mr. Ross:

Q. Are all the veterans' homes under the Veterans' Land Act constructed on a cost plus basis?

A. No; I mentioned in the statement which I made this morning that a number of these houses were let on a firm price basis, one at Calgary, one at Lethbridge, and one at Moncton, and also a few in Ontario, about two hundred, which were let on a firm price basis. The rest were all cost plus basis.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Right Hon. IAN A. MACKENZIE (Minister of Veterans Affairs): If I may reply quietly to this question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I