

Criminal Code

government's intention is that the total food aid program for the coming fiscal year should be raised to about \$75 million.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): May I ask a supplementary question of the Secretary of State for External Affairs regarding Canadian food aid to Pakistan. I wonder if the minister has noted that today the Pakistan government announced the purchase of tanks and military aircraft from red China?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; the hon. member cannot ask if a minister has noted a report. The question is not properly put.

FOOD AND DRUGS

INQUIRY AS TO MEETING OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. William Dean Howe (Hamilton South): In the absence of the Minister of Public Works I should like to ask the Prime Minister if he can tell the house when the first meeting of the special committee on food and drugs will be held?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): I cannot, but I will make inquiries.

HARBOURS

MONTREAL—REFUSAL OF PERMISSION TO HANDLE FOREIGN GRAIN

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Théogène Ricard (Saint Hyacinthe-Bago): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. In view of the widespread protest against regulations laid down by the Winnipeg Grain Exchange under which the port of Montreal is not allowed to handle grain grown outside the country, will the minister assure the house that the government will permit representatives of the port of Montreal to contest such regulations?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): I can inform the hon. gentleman and the house that I am already making arrangements to meet early in April with Montreal port authorities, and all the other interested bodies.

CRIMINAL CODE

PROPOSED AMENDMENT REGARDING CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Messrs. Byrne, Nugent, Scott (Danforth) and Stanbury moved:

Resolved, that it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the Criminal Code for the purposes of

(a) abolishing the death penalty in respect of all offences under that act;

(b) substituting a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment in those cases where the death penalty is now mandatory; and

(c) providing that no person upon whom a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment is imposed shall be released from imprisonment without the prior approval of the Governor in Council.

[Translation]

Mr. Maurice Allard (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order before the start of the debate on this interesting resolution. May I ask the four movers if they would agree to divide their resolution in two parts for the purpose of the vote. Paragraphs (a) and (b) are directed especially to people who favour abolishing the death penalty, if paragraph (c) was separated from the other two, this would allow hon members who favour abolishing the death penalty as well as those who want it retained to vote for that third paragraph.

I would ask the movers of that resolution whether they would allow the house to vote separately on paragraphs (a) and (b) which are quite clear in one way or the other and on paragraph (c). Several hon. members who will probably vote for the retention of the death penalty will be glad to see that a sentence of life imprisonment cannot be mitigated without the approval of the governor in council.

I would like a ruling to be made on my point of order before the debate starts.

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the point of order—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Before considering the point of order, I would say to the hon. member that the chair had recognized the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Nugent). The hon. member for Sherbrooke has moved an amendment without really doing so. I do not believe it is possible at this time to discuss the matter in that way. The hon. member could move an amendment to that effect and the chair would rule whether it is in order.

The hon. member is now asking a hypothetical question that could be considered by the members who introduced the resolution. For the time being, the movers of that resolution must be given an opportunity to express their views.

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There was a precedent in this house. At that time, it was incumbent on the Speaker to divide such a resolution in two. Since paragraph (c) is inconsistent with