

Inquiries of the Ministry

believe that proceedings under the Combines Investigation Act are necessary, he will take action.

Mr. Gregoire: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since this supervisor or director of research does not submit any report at present, does this mean that the minister draws the conclusion that there is nothing irregular with the current increases in the price of sugar?

Mr. Chevrier: No, Mr. Speaker, not necessarily, because the inquiry may take some time. Besides, I must remind my honourable friend that there is at present an order against at least two, maybe three, firms selling sugar and their officers, forbidding them to do any price fixing at all; that order was granted in the superior court, in Montreal, at the beginning of the year.

[Text]

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

PENHOLD, ALTA.—PETITION REQUESTING
RETENTION AS TRAINING BASE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Lawrence E. Kindt (Macleod): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Agriculture if he signed a petition to the government requesting that the Penhold airport be retained as a jet training base?

Hon. Harry W. Hays (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I did not sign any petitions.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

PROTECTION AGAINST FOOD POISONING FROM
FISH PRODUCTS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. H. J. Robichaud (Minister of Fisheries): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the hon. member for Queens asked me a question in connection with a warning by the United States food and drug administration that some smoked fish products from the great lakes contain the botulus organism, and I promised I would give a full reply today.

The Departments of National Health and Welfare and Fisheries have viewed with concern the recent evidence from the United States associating death from botulism with the consumption of specific types of smoked fish. During the past three years nine deaths and a number of non-fatal cases of illness have been shown to be due to the presence in the smoked fish of a toxic substance produced by a bacterium called clostridium botulinum type E. No reports of similar illness have occurred in Canada during this period.

Canadian consumers should be informed that cooking destroys the toxic substance.

[Mr. Chevrier.]

Therefore any food product eaten immediately after thorough cooking is safe with regard to this type of poisoning. Investigators of the two departments have had this problem under study for about two years. There is evidence to suggest that the practice of packing smoked fish in impermeable plastic wrappers increases the risk of botulism from this product. Accordingly the two departments are considering legislation to prohibit the sale of smoked fish packed in containers sealed to exclude air unless the packaged product has been rendered commercially sterile by a suitable heat process.

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. L. J. Pigeon (Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Prime Minister. Does the Prime Minister agree with the description of the province of Quebec as a state by Premier Lesage?

AIR TRANSPORT

APPLICATION TO DISCONTINUE PART OF
PRAIRIE SERVICE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Transport a question arising out of a report, which I find to be inaccurate, that there has been filed with the air transport board a request by Transair to give up the licence that the minister's department awarded it only last March to operate the milk run on the prairies. I wonder whether the minister could give us an explanation of the situation, particularly in view of the fact that Transair was assisted so much by a crown corporation in taking over this route.

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Transport): Yes, I would be glad to give an answer to that question. The application is to give up part of the run. The reason for the application is that on one segment of the run the average number of passengers per flight was less than one person. An air line simply cannot operate on that basis. The notices for the hearing have been given today, and it is proposed in the notice that the subject of the hearing will be that the service be varied and that west of Regina the service on this route would be discontinued as of December 31.

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): May I ask a supplementary question. Does the Minister of Transport know the circumstances surrounding that application, and that the fares charged by this air carrier are twice those that are charged here in eastern