

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 17, 1950

The house met at three o'clock.

RAILWAYS, CANALS AND TELEGRAPH LINES

SIXTH AND SEVENTH REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE—CONCURRENCE IN SEVENTH REPORT

Mr. L. O. Breithaupt (Waterloo North) presented the sixth and seventh reports of the standing committee on railways, canals and telegraph lines, and moved that the seventh report be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

INFORMATION SERVICES

REFERENCE TO "CANADIAN WEEKLY BULLETIN" OF MAY 12, 1950

Mr. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege I wish to draw the attention of the house to the "Canadian Weekly Bulletin," of May 12, issued by the information division of the Department of External Affairs. On the last page there is a small item which reads:

Mr. Drew's motion defeated: Accepting the government's previously expressed view that Canada's anti-subversive laws are adequate, the House of Commons, on May 8, rejected the motion of Mr. George Drew, Progressive Conservative leader, for amendment to the Criminal Code to make communism and "other similar activities" a criminal offence.

I would point out that the motion before the house dealt with communist and other similar activities. If this was regarded as a matter to be commented on by this weekly bulletin issued by a department of the government, then it would have been appropriate that the quotation marks be in the right place and that the words of the motion itself be used. There is a distinct difference between a proposal to make communism a criminal offence and appropriate legislation to deal with communist and similar activities. I have stated on numerous occasions that an attempt to deal in an act with communism under the name of communism is not effective because it is possible to change the name from time to time. That is the reason why the resolution was drawn as it was, and asked for appropriate legislation to deal with communist and similar activities.

At the appropriate time I will raise strong objection to public money being spent on a propaganda sheet of this kind. I object to

such a sheet misrepresenting what has been stated in the house.

FIRE AND FLOOD DAMAGE

MANITOBA AND QUEBEC—APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I should like to communicate to the house a message I have just received, through the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, from the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. It is as follows:

On behalf of my colleagues and myself I should like to convey to you the deep concern with which we have learned of the serious floods in Winnipeg. Please express our heartfelt sympathy with those who have suffered in the catastrophe.

I should also like to make the following announcement in connection with the Manitoba disaster.

The government of Canada has reached agreement with the government of Manitoba to appoint a fact-finding commission, consisting of Mr. D. Bruce Shaw of the city of Winnipeg, investment banker, and Mr. J. B. Carswell of the city of Vancouver, engineer, "to inquire into the nature and extent of the damage caused by the 1950 flood in the Red river valley in Manitoba, the cost of fighting the flood and the providing of emergency relief required because of the flood, and of emergency precautions to guard against the recurrence of such flood conditions, in order to make available at the earliest possible date a complete statement of all the essential facts necessary to determine the amount of the grant which the federal government should make to the government of Manitoba in order to assist that government in discharging its responsibilities in respect of the said flood."

Mr. D. Bruce Shaw is one of the leading investment bankers in the city of Winnipeg, where he has lived for a number of years. He will represent the government of Manitoba on the commission. The dominion's appointee is Mr. John B. Carswell, a prominent engineer of the city of Vancouver, who acted as chairman of the Fraser valley diking board set up by the joint action of the government of Canada and the government of British Columbia to supervise the reconstruction of the Fraser river valley dikes which were destroyed in the flood of 1948.