

*Inquiries of the Ministry***KOREA**

REPORTED ARRANGEMENTS FOR A CEASE-FIRE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggart): Can the Prime Minister give the house any information regarding the cease-fire agreement which, according to the latest British United Press dispatches, has been reached in Korea? Will this welcome news mean that as far as the United Nations—Canada being a member—are concerned, the fighting will cease? The dispatch is a little obscure. I would quote it as follows:

In the meantime it is believed that while officially the war will continue during the thirty-day period, it actually will die down.

In view of the interest of many Canadians, some with sons overseas, can the Prime Minister tell us what Canada's position is regarding this cease-fire?

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): I am sorry that I cannot give the hon. member any better information than I gave my wife when I went home for lunch. I did not hear the newscast over the radio as she did. She was quite firm in her belief that the fighting had ceased. As I had no official information I had to tell her that my understanding was that they were to agree upon where the line would be drawn, and if they could within thirty days settle the other matters in dispute; all that before the cease-fire order took place. I assume, if they are well on the way to agreement, the fighting might be less active in the meantime, and I would hope that that would be the case. I shall give the house the information just as soon as we can get it from the headquarters of the United Nations.

Mr. Coldwell: After hearing the broadcast I thought that perhaps the Prime Minister might know more about the matter.

Mr. St. Laurent: We are endeavouring to get accurate information from the United Nations headquarters as to what it really means and I shall communicate that information to the house just as soon as it is obtained.

GRAIN

RESULTS OF PLEBISCITE ON MARKETING OF OATS AND BARLEY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. S. Sinnott (Springfield): I should like to ask the Minister of Trade and Commerce a question, of which I have given notice. Can he give the house information as to how many voted for and against the marketing of oats and barley through the Canadian

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

wheat board in the plebiscite held in Manitoba, on Saturday, November 24?

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Trade and Commerce): The department has no official information regarding the results. After receiving the notice I asked for such information as could be obtained at that time. I understand the question asked was: Are you in favour of the present system of marketing oats and barley through the Canadian wheat board? The unofficial figures are as follows: 30,622 voted yes and 3,797 voted no.

Mr. Bryce: Will the government, following the result of Saturday's coarse grain plebiscite in Manitoba, and having in mind the recommendation of the pools, give consideration to discontinuing the use of the Winnipeg grain exchange in making sales, and to placing flax and rye under the wheat board?

Mr. Howe: The methods used in marketing oats and barley are methods that commend themselves to the wheat board which is responsible for that operation. No consideration has been given to placing the marketing of flax and rye under the wheat board.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ITALY—PO RIVER FLOOD—QUESTION AS TO ASSISTANCE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. A. Earl Catherwood (Haldimand): I have a question which I should like to direct to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, but as he is not here I will direct it to the Prime Minister. Has the government received an appeal from any Italian sources or agencies asking for assistance for the people in the stricken areas of the Po river where disastrous floods have rendered almost 200,000 people homeless and caused property damage of hundreds of millions of dollars? If the government has received an appeal, will the Prime Minister state whether any help is being extended to these people?

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): The short answer to both questions is no, but I do not think I should leave it at that. I think I should inform the house that the Secretary of State for External Affairs as chairman of the North Atlantic council has sent the following message to the prime minister of Italy, Signor de Gasperi:

I am sure that I speak for all NATO governments in expressing to you our warm sympathy and deep concern for the trials and hardships which the people in northern Italy are suffering from the disastrous floods. Italy's partners in NATO will, I know, wish to co-operate by whatever means may be possible in giving help and assistance to meet this tragic emergency.