

the part of this board, which is composed of equal representatives of labour and the employers. Before my hon. friend asked his question he must have known that governments do not interfere with boards of that description; that is elementary and fundamental. That is all I have to say.

TRACTORS AND TRUCKS

AVAILABILITY FOR FARM PURPOSES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. G. DIEFENBAKER (Lake Centre): I should like to ask the Minister of Munitions and Supply whether more tractors will be made available to farmers this spring than was the case in 1944. Apparently there has been some relaxation in the United States, and I was wondering if the minister would be in a position to advise what will be the situation in this country during the coming spring.

Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Munitions and Supply): As my hon. friend knows, tractors are not manufactured in Canada; our supply comes from the United States. We are on a quota basis there and if, as is suggested, the restriction on the manufacture of tractors has been relaxed in that country our quota will be raised accordingly, since a certain proportion of all tractors manufactured there come to Canada. Without going into the question in more detail I cannot say the extent of the relaxation, but I do know that if there has been any relaxation we will receive our proportionate share.

Hon. R. B. HANSON (York-Sunbury): In this connection would the minister be good enough to make a statement with respect to the release of trucks in Canada? It is a burning question in my part of the country. Trucks in use at present are wearing out. There is provision for replacement, but the population is constantly changing, and the demand is changing, and I understand it is impossible for any newcomer to get a truck. As a result the truck transportation system is bogging down. I should like the minister to make a statement on that matter.

Mr. HOWE: The position in regard to trucks is very similar to the position in regard to tractors. We do make trucks in this country, but the release of trucks in Canada and the United States is proportionate. We think there is a fair distribution of such trucks as can be made available as between the two countries. As my hon. friend knows, heavy trucks are made in the United States and light trucks in Canada. There is some inter-

change between the two countries, but as in the case of tractors the distribution is proportionate.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The point I am making is that a firm rule has been laid down that a truck may not be sold to any person who never had a truck before, such as a man engaging in a new business to take the place of someone else who has dropped out. That man cannot get a truck. I realize that the situation is difficult, but it has been the cause of considerable hardship.

Mr. HOWE: I suggest that it would have been an even greater hardship if we had refused trucks to established trucking businesses and had given them to others setting up competing businesses. I think the plan of giving priority to the replacement of existing trucks is the only sound plan.

SHIPBUILDING

INQUIRY AS TO CLOSING DOWN OF TORONTO PLANT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview): Has the government decided to close the shipbuilding plant on the Toronto waterfront? Could it not be used after the war for civilian shipbuilding purposes? At the present time we have no drydock at Toronto for large ships and they must be sent to Kingston or to Port Dalhousie or Montreal. This is an urgent matter.

Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Munitions and Supply): The shipyard at Toronto was established for one specific purpose; that was to build corvettes and minesweepers. There was no particular construction; the facilities at that point were adopted for that use. Those facilities are still being used for that purpose, and there is a fairly busy season ahead for the yard. After that the matter will have to receive further consideration.

OIL

PROGRESS OF OPERATIONS AT FORT MCMURRAY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. R. MacNICOL (Davenport): I should like to ask the Minister of Mines and Resources if it is his intention to issue a progress report in connection with the production of oil at Fort McMurray.

Hon. T. A. CRERAR (Minister of Mines and Resources): That has not been considered, but I shall be glad to take my hon. friend's suggestion under consideration.