

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, February 18, 1954

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Second report of standing committee on banking and commerce.—Mr. Croll.

CRIMINAL LAW—CONCURRENCE IN FIRST REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE

Mr. D. F. Brown (Essex West) presented the first report of the joint committee on capital and corporal punishment and lotteries, and moved that the report be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

TRADE

CANNED SALMON—RELAXATION OF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS BY AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I wish to inform the house that the Australian government is undertaking a measure of relaxation in its import restrictions upon canned salmon. This news is important because it signifies the partial reopening of the Australian market to a Canadian export product which has been excluded from there in recent years. Further details on this matter will come from the Australian government.

While the total quantities involved may not be large, this renewed opportunity for trade will undoubtedly be welcomed in British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada as evidence of progress in returning to more normal conditions of world trade. Canned salmon is one of our major export products. Immediately before the war Canada had a market for canned salmon in Australia which amounted to \$1½ million or \$2 million per year. Since then these exports have been much reduced, until in recent years the quantities have become negligible. The Australian decision will, therefore, permit the Canadian industry to return once more to this traditional market.

The house is aware of the fact that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott), accompanied by a delegation of senior officials, attended the commonwealth finance ministers' conference in Sydney, Australia, last month.

Following that conference the Canadian representatives took advantage of the opportunity of discussing trade questions with the Australian government in Canberra.

I desire to extend my vote of thanks to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Green: May I ask the minister whether he can tell the house how much salmon is involved in the deal?

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): We were asked by the Australian government not to disclose that information at the moment. It will be released in Australia.

WHEAT

NEW SELLING PRICES AT VANCOUVER, FORT WILLIAM AND CHURCHILL

Hon. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Is it the intention of the Acting Prime Minister to make any announcement today with regard to the reduction in the price of wheat and the particular circumstances in which that reduction has been made?

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I shall be glad to do so, if it is the wish of the house. I thought there might be a question asked with respect to the matter, and that I would then make a statement.

The new prices that have been issued do not really represent a lowering of the prices. We have three marketing points. One is Vancouver, another is Fort William-Port Arthur and the third is Churchill. It has been our policy to price our wheat for export the same at all three points. In other words, the price at Vancouver is also the price at which grain is sold at Fort William and at Churchill. Owing to higher rail rates within Canada and lower ocean freight rates outside of Canada, the effect of that policy has been that the comparative Vancouver rate has been very much lower than the Fort William rate. While the port of Vancouver has been working to full capacity—in fact we have even exceeded the record of this time last year in shipments from Vancouver—we have