

PENSIONS

REQUEST FOR EARLY CONSIDERATION OF
LEGISLATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I address a question to the Prime Minister. Will the Canada pension plan, which according to the speech from the throne is to be placed before us, be given high priority and proceeded with in the early days of the session.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

TRADE

REPORTED ARAB PRESSURE AGAINST SALES
TO ISRAEL

On the orders of the day:

Mr. M. L. Klein (Cartier): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. In view of the fact that a number of Canadian firms, which in the interests of expanding Canadian export trade are desiring to sell Canadian products to the state of Israel, are being subjected to threats—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Klein:—of boycott by the Arab league if they continue to sell Canadian products to Israel, will the government come to the assistance of these Canadian firms, with a view to having these threatening practices removed?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, to our knowledge only a few Canadian firms have had their interests affected or threatened by the Arab boycott of Israel. If a Canadian firm is affected or likely to be affected, the firm's actions should be governed by its own policies and interests. Should a Canadian firm seek the assistance of the Canadian government we would certainly be prepared to consider what assistance might usefully and appropriately be provided in the circumstances pertaining thereto.

COAL—REQUEST FOR SUBVENTION ON ADDITIONAL
SHIPMENTS TO JAPAN

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Lawrence E. Kindt (MacLeod): I should like to ask the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys when the coal operators and miners of the Crowsnest pass, who are waiting, may have an affirmative answer from this government concerning the subventions needed for the export of an additional 200,000 tons of coal to Japan.

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. J. P. Deschatelets (Minister of Public Works): I will bring this question to the attention of the minister and a reply will be given as soon as possible.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

INQUIRY AS TO THEFTS OF ARMS AND
AMMUNITION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Defence. Has any recovery been made of the very substantial quantities of arms and ammunition stolen in recent months from national defence property; and second, what steps are being taken by the minister to ensure adequate protection against the theft of arms and ammunition?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might be permitted to make a very brief statement on this subject. I share the concern of the house over recent armoury thefts. This is, of course, a worrisome situation.

Concerning the theft in Montreal, I directed the army to provide full support to other police forces, federal, provincial and municipal, in the investigation of the crime. The full resources of these organizations have been working on the case. As yet the stolen goods have not been recovered.

I also directed that appropriate action be taken to increase security measures at all military establishments at which weapons and ammunition were stored. At units where it is not feasible to provide armed guards, steps were taken to make weapons ineffective by removing their working mechanisms. Ammunition was removed and put in storage at protected depots. In the Montreal area, because of its special sensitivity, a company of the Royal 22nd regiment from Valcartier is providing armed protection.

Noranda is one of the units where it is not considered feasible to provide adequate round the clock protection to secure the building. The theft there demonstrated the wisdom of precautionary measures to secure the weapons by removing their working parts.

I fully realize the seriousness of this problem and its wider implications. In consequence I established a five man commission to consider all problems relating to security of defence installations, and directed them to report as soon as possible. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police graciously agreed to assist service representatives in their task. The terms of reference of this commission include the responsibility to categorize defence