

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

communist government. There are no grounds which justify these actions which, indeed, violate all standards of decent international conduct. The government, and especially the Department of External Affairs, have received both privately and publicly a good deal of advice as to what should be done to stop this persecution and to protect Canadian citizens. The difficulties in the way of action which is likely to be effective in this regard are obvious, especially when we do not recognize the communist government of China and must, therefore, request the diplomatic good offices of other states. But I can assure the house that we are doing everything we possibly can to discharge our responsibilities in this matter. I would add, however, that if we tried to intervene along lines which have, with the best of intentions, been advocated by some, we would not help the unfortunate Canadians concerned but might well increase their difficulties and, indeed, add to their dangers.

**FISHERIES****STORMS IN NOVA SCOTIA—DAMAGE TO FISHERMEN'S EQUIPMENT**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. T. A. M. Kirk (Digby-Yarmouth):** In view of the change in our procedure, are we going to be permitted to ask oral questions now? If so, I should like to direct one to the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Fisheries.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the wish of the house that oral questions should be asked now?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Kirk (Digby-Yarmouth):** I should like to ask the parliamentary assistant to the minister two brief questions based on my question to him of a week ago Friday. Is the Department of Fisheries carrying on an investigation to ascertain the loss suffered by the lobster fishermen of southwestern Nova Scotia owing to severe storms in the last week? If such an investigation is being carried on, has he as yet any figures to indicate the extent of the loss?

**Mr. J. Watson MacNaught (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Fisheries):** I thank the hon. member for giving me notice of his question. The Department of Fisheries, as it does in all cases where the welfare of fishermen is involved, is carrying out an investigation concerning the amount of damage done by the storm in Nova Scotia. Preliminary reports have been received concerning the amount of damage but not sufficient information has come to hand on which could be based any actual estimate of the amount of damage done.

[Mr. Pearson.]

**LABOUR CONDITIONS****UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. W. G. Blair (Lanark):** I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Labour. Is the minister ready to make a statement on the measures to be taken by the government to relieve the unemployment situation in the Canadian textile industry? This matter is urgent.

**Hon. Milton F. Gregg (Minister of Labour):** I think my hon. friend perhaps refers to that phase of unemployment to which he called our attention the other day. I know that he attended a meeting in that connection within the last few days. When he spoke to me the other day I told him that just before Christmas, with officials of the various departments of government concerned, I met a delegation on the matter. Since that time I have taken their representations up with the ministers concerned and the matter is receiving consideration.

**IMPORTATION OF REFRIGERATORS—LAY-OFFS IN CANADIAN PLANTS**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. C. W. Hodgson (Victoria, Ont.):** I should like to direct a question to the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Trade and Commerce, in view of the fact that I have received a communication from a labour group in my riding indicating that the work days had been cut from four to three days per week. On December 21 I asked a question about refrigerator freezer units and it was claimed that last year less than 500 refrigerators came from the United States whereas this year the number is 98,000. Has the government done anything to stop this dumping?

**Mr. G. J. McIlraith (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Trade and Commerce):** I believe there is no evidence of dumping at all in so far as refrigerators are concerned. The departmental officials have checked into the whole question of refrigerators, their production and sale in this country. I recognize it is not appropriate to debate the subject or deal with it fully now, but I feel I should place on the record the fact that in the early part of this year there was a rate of production on refrigerators that was very much beyond any reasonable expectation of consumption in Canada for this year. A considerable amount of the difficulty of that industry is due to that factor. As to dumping, I am not aware of any dumping within the meaning of the act.

**Mr. Hodgson:** In reference to dumping, may I say one word—

**Some hon. Members:** Order.