

Steamship Bright Fan

hon. Minister of Marine (Mr. Duranleau) may I ask the right hon. Prime Minister if it is the intention of the government to introduce during the present session legislation to implement any recommendations of the Gibb report.

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister): The hon. Solicitor General (Mr. Dupré) is the Acting Minister of Marine in the absence of the minister. I am not in a position to give an answer to that question until the minister returns. Certainly legislation, if any, will not be introduced until after the adjournment.

WORLD ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. L. RALSTON (Shelburne-Yarmouth): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the right hon. Prime Minister, as Secretary of State for External Affairs, if there is any objection to bringing down whatever correspondence is in the possession of the government with regard to the world economic conference, about which he spoke last night.

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Secretary of State for External Affairs): I will have to take time to answer that question, treating the request as a notice of motion. I am not in a position to say definitely, but my recollection at the moment is that the only communications we have are communications from the secretariat of the League of Nations. The document from which I read last night is of course available to the hon. gentleman as a publication of the league. But it was supplemented by despatches which came from the British government, which in any event I would not be in a position to bring down until after I had consulted that government as to whether or not there were any objections. That is the position. But I will look into it to-morrow.

HUDSON BAY RAILWAY

SINKING OF STEAMSHIP BRIGHT FAN IN HUDSON STRAITS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. B. M. STITT (Nelson): Mr. Speaker, I desire to ask the Acting Minister of Marine (Mr. Dupré) a question, based on a series of telegrams I have received from Churchill in connection with the sinking of the steamship Bright Fan in Hudson straits on or about October 1.

The first telegram is dated Churchill, the 10th of October:

[Mr. I. Mackenzie.]

B. M. Stitt, M.P.,
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Friend Barney: re enquiry into sinking of Bright Fan in Hudson straits. I was passage worker on board from Churchill to England and as you are personally aware have my faith pinned on the success of this route. It certainly is essential that I should be on this enquiry on behalf of your government and all Canadian citizens concerned. Captain Oliver of the Bright Fan now wants leave me here at Churchill. This train I am informed leaves tomorrow morning for Montreal so you will have to act quickly if you want a thorough enquiry into this unfortunate disaster. I am prepared to go and have the true facts of the whole situation. Get in touch with your ministers and wire me expenses by return. Kind regards,

Bert Barker.

On the strength of that telegram I wired Mr. Barker yesterday as follows:

Ottawa, 10-9-32.

Bert Barker,
Churchill, Man.

Wire me correct statement of facts followed by sworn statement and I will then be in a position to demand on floor of house a thorough enquiry re sinking of Bright Fan.

Regards,

B. M. Stitt.

Then I received this morning a further wire from Ernest J. Schofield, notary public, Manitoba, which covers the sworn statement made by Bert Barker in regard to this incident:

B. M. Stitt, M.P.,
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ont.

Replying to your wire of this date I have to-day made the following sworn statement, and quote verbatim:

I, Bertram Herbert Barker, of Churchill, in the province of Manitoba, passenger worker of SS. Bright Fan, make oath and say: That I was on the SS. Bright Fan—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. Does the hon. member intend to address a question to the government? If so, I wish he would proceed with the question and not take so much time of the house reading affidavits and telegrams and other communications. This is not the proper time to read them.

Mr. STITT (Nelson): The question arises from this wire, Mr. Speaker, I could not intelligently ask the question unless I read this wire.

Mr. SPEAKER: It means he prefers to read them, but he can ask the question right now.

Mr. STITT (Nelson): Very good. I would like to ask the Acting Minister of Marine whether or not opportunity will be given to Mr. Barker to appear before the board of inquiry that I understand is being called to inquire into this disaster. Mr. Barker