

Inquiries of the Ministry

and Commerce. In view of the recent extension of the scope of operation of the United States export-import bank, would the minister give immediate consideration to expanding the operations of the Export Credit Insurance Corporation, and in particular to widening the basis on which direct guarantees could be issued with regard to negotiable instruments given to Canadian exporters by foreign buyers in respect of export transactions?

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Trade and Commerce): This is a rather complicated question. If it were placed on the order paper I think we could give a satisfactory written answer to the hon. member.

TRANSPORT

ICEBREAKER ASSISTANCE FOR CANADIAN SEALING SHIPS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. R. Tucker (Trinity-Conception): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transport, a copy of which has been sent to him. Will the minister please inform the house whether his department received a request to free three Newfoundland sealing ships and one Halifax ship operating along the coast of Labrador? If so, what action has been taken by his department, and when? Since coming into the house I have learned that one of the Newfoundland sealing ships, the *Terra Nova*, recently sank but I understand her crew was saved.

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I should like to thank the hon. member for giving me notice of his intention to ask this question.

The C.M.S. *Wolfe* sailed on March 23 to assist a Norwegian sealing vessel disabled in ice on the Labrador coast. The *Wolfe* towed the ship to open water and met the salvage tug *Foundation Vigilant* on March 27. The *Wolfe* then proceeded to assist the Canadian sealers *Camperdown* and *St. Adresse*. When these vessels have been escorted to open water the *Wolfe* will proceed to assist the sealer *Arctic Prowler* and take on board 48 crew members of the sunken sealer *Terra Nova* and transport them to Newfoundland.

TELEVISION

TORONTO—COMMUNICATIONS RESPECTING ISSUE OF LICENCE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur): I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of current comments on the matter,

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can the Prime Minister tell us whether any oral or written communications have gone from him or his cabinet associates to the board of broadcast governors or to any individual B.B.G. member which suggested or indicated a preference for any particular applicant for a television station licence in Toronto, notably the successful Bassett application?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, may I say with all emphasis, no.

POWER

COLUMBIA RIVER—REPORTED STATEMENT OF B.C. MINISTER RESPECTING FEDERAL LOAN

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Finance whether he has any comment to make on a statement by the minister of lands and forests of the government of British Columbia, reported in the *Vancouver Sun* of March 24, that the federal government had offered to lend British Columbia half the cost of the development of the Columbia river?

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have not seen the article in question. I do not think this is a matter than can usefully be dealt with simply by a question based on an article that I have not seen.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

EXTENSION OF BENEFITS TO CANADIAN WOODSMEN IN MAINE—APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER FOR RESTIGOUCHE-MADAWASKA

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Jean-Paul Racine (Beauce): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Labour. In view of the offer made by the hon. member for Restigouche-Madawaska (Mr. Van Horne) on the proposed extension of unemployment insurance benefits to Canadian woodsmen working in the state of Maine, can the minister advise the house whether he intends to accept the offer and appoint the hon. member for Restigouche-Madawaska as official representative of the government to meet with the governor of the state of Maine and settle this problem, as promised by the hon. member?

Hon. Michael Starr (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the question is no.