

Motions for Papers

3. Are steps being taken to discontinue any rural mail routes in (a) Manitoba; (b) Saskatchewan; (c) Alberta, in 1954?
4. If so, in what locations?

RURAL MAIL COURIERS—CONTRACT PRICES

Mr. Kickham:

1. Since 1935, has the government increased rural mail couriers contract prices?
2. If so, on what dates and in what amount?
3. What has been the total percentage of increase granted to all mail couriers since the above date over their own firm tender contract price?
4. What is the average rate of remuneration per mile now paid in each of the ten provinces of Canada for rural route service?

BELCHER HOSPITAL—TOTAL BED CAPACITY

Mr. Hansell:

1. What is the total bed capacity in the Belcher hospital, Calgary?
2. How many patients were treated, other than preliminary examinations in 1953?
3. What has been the total percentage of increase in the hospital, what are the categories of employment, and how many in each category?

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

ST. LAWRENCE WATERWAY

Mr. Diefenbaker:

For a copy of all correspondence that passed between any department of the government of the United States and any department of the government of Canada, and a copy of all agreements entered into, since the 1st day of January 1952, in connection with the St. Lawrence waterway and power project.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, there is no difficulty in regard to the production of information sought in the last part of this question. It deals with all agreements entered into, since the 1st day of January, 1952, between Canada and the United States in connection with the St. Lawrence waterway and power project.

The first part of this question, however, asks for correspondence between the two governments in this matter. Such correspondence, being diplomatic correspondence between two governments with a view to working out an international agreement, and in that sense working papers leading up to that agreement, is normally privileged and not made public. There would therefore be a very real difficulty in producing that correspondence, quite apart from the fact that the consent of the United States government would have to be obtained.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Would the minister allow a question? Would the United States government raise any objection to producing that correspondence?

Mr. Pearson: At this time I am not objecting to it on that ground at all, but on

the ground that this kind of correspondence is privileged here and is not produced.

Mr. Speaker: Subject to the statement by the minister, is the motion carried?

Motion agreed to.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES—CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Gagnon:

For a copy of all correspondence exchanged since January 1, 1948, between the international Bible students, the watchtower and tract society, the Jehovah's witnesses and the national defence, justice and post office departments and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Mr. Pickersgill: I have spoken to the hon. member who is moving this motion, and suggested to him that the words "of a general nature" be inserted in the motion after the word "correspondence". It has been represented to me, by all the four departments concerned, that if we left the motion in its present form they would have to search every file they have because their filing system is based on subject. I have informed the hon. member of this fact, and he agrees that if we put those words in it would not be necessary for the department to scrutinize all their files but only to look in the most likely places for this correspondence. If the motion can be passed on that basis, it is quite agreeable to the government.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the motion carry, subject to the statement by the minister?

Motion agreed to.

COMBINES INVESTIGATION ACT

CIGARETTES—COMPLAINT ON LOSS LEADER PRACTICES IN QUEBEC

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Hector Dupuis (St. Mary): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. Has the minister received a telegram from the retail tobacco merchants of Quebec, complaining against the selling of tobacco at cut prices, especially cigarettes which in some stores are sold at cost price and in some instances below cost price? If so, has the minister any declaration to make now with regard to this matter?

Hon. Stuart S. Garson (Minister of Justice): I wish to thank the hon. member for having given me notice of his question. I have received such a telegram, and I have written in reply to Mr. E. Falstraut, secretary of the retail tobacco association in Montreal, to the effect that the restrictive trade practices commission is now engaged in an inquiry into the