

when, in its best judgment, it can intervene successfully, in order to bring about an amicable settlement of the present difficulties.

Motion withdrawn.

## TRADE AND INDUSTRY COMMISSION

### INQUIRY WITH RESPECT TO APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. S. TAYLOR (Nanaimo): Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day are called, and in view of the inquiry directed to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) on March 29, as reported at page 2235 of Hansard, may I inquire of him if the matter of the appointment of a public prosecutor, as provided by the Dominion Trade and Industry Commission Act, has been considered? If so, what is the decision of the government? If there has been a positive decision, when will the appointment of the prosecutor be made?

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. member may I say that the matter is still under consideration, and a final decision has not yet been reached.

## DOUKHOBOR DISTURBANCES

### DESTRUCTION OF PUBLIC PROPERTY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

On the order for committee of supply:

Mr. W. K. ESLING (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, because the rules of the house do not offer another opportunity, with the unanimous consent of hon. members I should like to preface a question to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) by a very brief statement. I do so because this is a matter involving terrorism, dynamiting and incendiarism. A whole community in my constituency is terrorized by the action of a fanatical group of Doukhobors who, in two or three hours last Sunday morning, dynamited and bombed eleven schools, seven of which were totally destroyed. Community halls, churches and other meeting places are under guard. The situation is so intolerable that the farmers institute at Robson, the centre of the disturbances, has wired a request that I bring the matter to the attention of the Minister of Justice.

Last June one of these fanatical Doukhobors was convicted of burning a bridge. Immediately following the conviction there were no

less than fifteen fires, and it must be understood that the perpetrators are not particular as to whether or not life is endangered by their actions. Very often the teachers make their homes in these small public schools.

We realize, as the minister will no doubt tell us, that it is up to the provincial government to maintain order and to enforce the law. The difficulty however is that it is impossible for them to do so. There are records of about fifty fires; the provincial police have done their very best, but they are up against a stone wall because the Doukhobors are dumb in so far as giving information is concerned. They simply tell the provincial police that there is plenty of money to run down offenders of our nationality, and that they can use it to run down offenders of their nationality. I would ask the Minister of Justice if, without intruding upon the duties of the provincial police, he would enter into a conversation with the attorney general of British Columbia with a view to participating in bringing this period of terrorism to an end.

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I know the house must have some realization of the seriousness of this situation. It is one which really beggars description. At another time I had occasion to direct attention to it, and I do not believe that the province can quite deal with it. Where you have eleven or twelve buildings destroyed by fire, blasting, dynamiting and other means you have a situation which we Canadians find it difficult to understand or appreciate. I suggest the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) should at least meet the views of the people in the locality—I am sure they have communicated with him, through the provincial authorities—

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Not yet.

Mr. BENNETT: —and see if it is not a matter of such national importance that he might provide assistance of a permanent character to prevent a recurrence of these terrible outrages against decency, so that law and order may in some way be maintained.

Hon. ERNEST LAPOINTE (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I fully realize the seriousness of the situation described by the hon. member (Mr. Esling) and the leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett). I may say that if our assistance is asked by the British Columbia authorities I shall be pleased to submit the matter to the government, with my support and recommendation. It seems to