

in the position of Mr. Stalin, have more absolute, uncontrolled and irresponsible latitude that the House was asked to confer upon the Minister of Reconstruction?

L.W. Skey (P.C. Toronto, Trinity) said the Government had tied Canadian gold mining to the international monetary fund, a fund which received its first death blow when France devalued the franc and became a realistic trader in the world's markets. Currency debacle was being brought about by the policies of the international monetary fund. Those policies were unrealistic. Currencies of all countries in the world, with the exception of Switzerland, had been over-valued in terms of U.S. dollars. This over-valuation made it impossible for some countries and difficult for others to export to the United States.

Clarence Gillis (C.C.F. Cape Breton) said if he thought the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply was going to develop the coal industry so that it could stand on its own feet and provide for development of the steel industry, he would back the Minister no matter what anyone thought. But Mr. Gillis could not support the present Bill because he thought it was designed to fool the people and integrate our economy with that of the United States. We should be under their domination in the future to such an extent as to become a satellite nation.

J.H. Blackmore (Social Credit, Lethbridge) said it was evident the Bretton Woods agreement was completely unsound and was being found unworkable. The nations would simply be crucified if they tried to make it work.

Mr. Blackmore felt we ought to denounce the principle of non-discrimination in trade. Non-discrimination would not be objectionable if all nations were equal in economic power. But they were not.

Debate adjourned.

REPORTED U.S. FUEL OIL EMBARGO: Replying to a question asked by M.J. Coldwell, C.C.F. leader, in the House of Commons, January 27, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr. Howe, made the following statement respecting reports of a possible U.S. embargo on fuel oil exports:

Mr. Howe: The government has for some weeks been concerned with suggestions that an embargo be imposed on the export of petroleum products from the United States to Canada. Our ambassador at Washington has held frequent conferences with the United States officials in that regard, and officers of their department of commerce have visited Canada to study our position. Our stock position of petroleum products has been fully disclosed. Our steps taken to limit the installation of oil burners throughout 1947 have been explained. After consultation with the petroleum industry in Canada, the government voluntarily has cut imports of petroleum products from United States during January to 50 per cent of quantities imported in the same month a year ago.

A corresponding cut is being studied for the months of February and March.

Any embargo on shipments of petroleum products from our traditional source of supply would be a calamity of the first order, but hon. members will appreciate that the decision is for the United States government.

Replying to a supplementary question by Mr. Gordon Graydon, Mr. Howe said that, at the present moment, the proportion of our oil requirements which could be met by maximum production in Canada was about eleven per cent. Perhaps a year from now, it would be somewhat higher.

UN TAX EXEMPTION: The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. St. Laurent, tabled in the House of Commons January 27 an Order in Council (P.C. 3946, October 1, 1947) authorizing the Secretary of State for External Affairs to execute, on behalf of Canada, an instrument of accession to the convention on the privileges and immunities of the United Nations with the reservation that exemption from taxation imposed by any law in Canada on salaries and emoluments shall not extend to a Canadian citizen resident in Canada.

NEW CHAIRMAN NATIONAL GALLERY: The Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King, announced Jan. 28 the appointment of the Right Honourable Vincent Massey as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Canada. Mr. Massey, who has been a member of the Board for many years, succeeds H.S. Southam, who has been Chairman of the Board of Trustees since February, 1929. Mr. Southam recently expressed to the Government his desire to be relieved of the responsibility of the Chairmanship of the Board of Trustees.

TIN PRICES INCREASE: Wartime Prices and Trade Board announces a sixteen cent increase in the price of tin raising the Canadian ceiling price from 80¢ a pound to the world price level of 96¢ per pound.

NATURAL INCREASE IN POPULATION: The natural increase in Canada's population in 1946 was 215,796 -- greatest on record, and 40,480 higher than the previous peak of 175,316 in 1945. This gain was due to a sharp increase in number of live births, deaths being only slightly higher.

Live births in 1946 totalled 330,727, the largest number ever registered in a twelve-month period, as compared with 288,730 in 1945, according to revised preliminary figures which will shortly be issued by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in printed form. Deaths moved up to 114,931 as compared with 113,414. Marriages also jumped to peak numbers, increasing to 134,088 as compared with 108,031 in 1945.