

*Hong Kong Inquiry*

twenty-one, mostly small importers excepting Australia, were still awaiting instructions from their government to sign. All of them expected their authorizations to sign before April 1. In addition to signature, the agreement is subject to formal acceptance by the thirty-six governments by July 1. Adjustment in the guaranteed quantities is provided for in the event any minor countries fail to formally accept, and for the agreement not to come into operation if one of the major countries stays out.

## HONG KONG

TABLING OF EVIDENCE TAKEN BEFORE DUFF  
COMMISSION

Hon. BROOKE CLAXTON (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the Prime Minister's statement of February 24 and the order of the house the following day, I now beg leave to table the evidence in the Hong Kong inquiry. I shall be glad to show the leaders of the different parties the originals of the various cables to verify the fact that the paraphrasing that is required has been made without changing the meaning in any way, and so that they may see also the four cases in which references of a confidential character have been made to units or individuals not forming part of the Hong Kong forces.

Mr. JOHN BRACKEN (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence arising out of the statement he has just made. The minister intimated that he was going to table the evidence, and I gathered that was done. May I ask how many copies of the evidence are available?

Mr. CLAXTON: There is only one copy.

Mr. BRACKEN: In view of the fact that there were two battalions there, the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles, why is the evidence tabled only in one language?

Mr. CLAXTON: The royal commission heard all the evidence in English, and the evidence that has been tabled and the exhibits that have been tabled are the same transcripts of evidence and the same exhibits that were used by the royal commissioner himself.

Mr. BRACKEN: The minister, then, does not intend to provide us with more than one copy of the evidence. That is all we are to have. Is that correct?

Mr. CLAXTON: There is only one copy.

[Mr. Howe.]

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

PAYMENT OF HONORARIUM OR EXPENSES TO  
MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN BROADCASTS

Mr. J. G. DIEFENBAKER (Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question affecting the privileges of the House of Commons and of many members of the house. It has to do with a matter arising out of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which from time to time pays an honorarium or expenses to members of the House of Commons for participating in broadcasts and the like put on by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. A number of members are affected by this, sir, and I therefore bring it to the attention of the house with a view to securing an opinion from the Minister of Justice as to whether or not, under the provisions of the Senate and House of Commons Act, the acceptance by a member of the House of Commons of an honorarium or expenses results in his being placed in the position that his seat is thereby vacated and thenceforth his election is null and void. It is, sir, a matter which I know affects a great many members in all parts of the house, and it is one respecting which there is considerable doubt.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: They didn't pay me anything.

Right Hon. J. L. ILSLEY (Minister of Justice): One or two members have spoken to me about this matter, and my reply to them was the same as the reply I shall have to give to my hon. friend, and that is that the Department of Justice or the Minister of Justice cannot give official opinions as to the liability of the members. The duties of the Minister of Justice, as set out in the Department of Justice Act, do not include the giving of opinions of that kind either to the members of the house or to the House of Commons itself. His duties are of a different character, such as advising the government and the departments, but not the House of Commons or members. This is a matter on which members will have to get such advice as they see fit and take their own responsibility. Perhaps the hon. member's purpose has been served by bringing the matter to the attention of the house.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: In view of the uncertainty, would the minister consider an amendment to remove the possibility of doubt in this connection?

Mr. REID: They do not have to take the money.

Mr. ILSLEY: I will bring that suggestion to the attention of my colleagues for their consideration.