

action at present to achieve agreement on the prohibition and control of atomic weapons, including the H-bomb?

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member was good enough to give me notice of his intention to ask this question, the answer to which is in the affirmative. The United Nations general assembly, by resolution of November 28 last year, suggested that the disarmament commission, which consists of the members of the security council and Canada, should study the desirability of establishing a subcommittee consisting of representatives of powers principally involved which would seek by agreement to work out arrangements for the elimination of all major weapons adaptable to mass destruction, and for effective international control of atomic energy to ensure the prohibition of atomic weapons and the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only. As the house will be aware, the disarmament commission held its most recent meeting in New York on April 9, and is meeting again this afternoon. In the resolution now before that commission Canada has been proposed for inclusion in the subcommittee, as a power principally involved, although no final decision has yet been taken by the disarmament commission. The Canadian government will of course play its full part as a member of the commission and is ready to participate in renewed efforts to resolve the problems of the control of atomic energy.

TRADE

PARIS CONFERENCE—STRATEGIC GOODS WITHHELD FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Colin Cameron (Nanaimo): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Has the minister's attention been drawn to the press report from Paris appearing in this morning's *Globe and Mail* regarding the conference of fifteen countries in Paris meeting to revise the list of strategic goods that the West refuses to send to communist countries; and can the minister inform the house whether Canada is sufficiently represented at this meeting?

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): I wish to thank the hon. member for having given notice of his question. I have seen the press dispatch in question, and Canada is being represented at the meeting to which this press dispatch refers. The head of our delegation to that meeting will be Dana Wilgress.

Inquiries of the Ministry VETERANS LAND ACT

REPORTED REFUSAL OF FARM IMPROVEMENT LOANS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Douglas Abbott (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) asked me if I was aware that veterans farming under the Veterans Land Act are being refused farm improvement loans. He also asked what is the reason for the change in policy respecting veterans.

I wish to state that there has been no change in the policy respecting these loans.

The Farm Improvement Loans Act provides for seven loan classes. The regulations under the act restrict loans in five of these seven classes to an owner of a farm. The definition of an owner under the Farm Improvement Loans Act is:

Owner includes one having an equitable or legal interest in the farm.

A person holding land under the Veterans Land Act is a tenant at will. Section 10 of the Veterans Land Act reads as follows:

Every veteran holding or occupying land sold by the director shall until the director grants or conveys the land to him be deemed a tenant at will.

It follows therefore that a Veterans Land Act settler would not be eligible for a farm improvement loan where a loan is restricted to an owner. A Veterans Land Act settler would, of course, be able to obtain a loan for the purchase of either livestock or farm implements. Under the regulations these two classes of loans can be made to tenants.

I am advised that one bank had issued a directive to its supervisors to the effect that Veterans Land Act settlers were not eligible for any loans under the Farm Improvement Loans Act. My officials took this up with the bank's supervisors and I have reason to believe that its head office will issue a corrected directive.

COAL

PURCHASES FOR GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. B. McCulloch (Pictou): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys (Mr. Prudham). How much bituminous coal was ordered for the federal government buildings in Ottawa for the fiscal years 1953-54 and 1954-55? How much of this, in each of the above two years, was Canadian coal?

Some hon. Members: Order paper.

Mr. McCulloch (Pictou): What prices per ton were paid in each of the two years?