

any officials on behalf of the government with any officials representing New Zealand, Australia or the United Kingdom, and if so what decision has been reached?

Right Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Anticipating a possible temporary shortage of butter in April the government communicated with Australia and New Zealand to inquire whether butter would be available from either source in the event it is required. The replies indicated that there is still a strong requirement for Australian and New Zealand butter for the United Kingdom. Therefore the government has dropped the proposal for obtaining butter from those sources.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

#### INTERNATIONAL BILL OF RIGHTS—APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. G. DIEFENBAKER (Lake Centre): I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister, having to do with press releases to the effect that Canada has made no recommendations regarding an international bill of rights. For that reason I ask the Prime Minister whether he intends to set up the committee on human rights and fundamental freedoms at an early date.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): I have not seen the references my hon. friend has mentioned, but as I understand his direct question it is whether the government intends to reappoint the committee on human rights and fundamental freedoms. The answer is yes.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Then if I may ask a supplemental question, has Canada made any recommendations as yet with respect to the composition of the international bill of rights, or with respect to any rights which should be included therein?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Obviously I could not answer that question without first conferring with the departments concerned. I shall regard it as a notice, to be answered later.

### RENT CONTROL

#### INQUIRY AS TO EXPIRATION OF CONTROL ON COMMERCIAL RENTALS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. DONALD M. FLEMING (Eglinton): In view of press reports of which the Minister of Finance is aware, I should like to ask him whether the government contemplates any change in the announced policy of per-

mitting rent control on commercial accommodation to expire on March 31, in keeping with the statement made by the minister in the house on January 27, at page 593 of *Hansard*.

Hon. DOUGLAS ABBOTT (Minister of Finance): No, Mr. Speaker. As long ago as June, 1947, I announced in the house that it was not the intention of the government to ask parliament to continue the control of commercial rentals beyond March 31 of this year, and an order of the wartime prices and trade board was subsequently passed—I am not sure as to the exact date—revoking the control of commercial rentals as of March 8, 1948. There is no intention of changing that order.

### FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONSERVATION

#### PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN IMPORTS AND PROVISION FOR IMPORT QUOTAS AND PERMITS

The house resumed from Tuesday, February 10, consideration in committee of Bill No. 3, respecting emergency measures for the conservation of Canadian foreign exchange resources—Mr. Abbott—Mr. Bradette in the chair.

On section 1—Short title.

Mr. ADAMSON: When the committee was last discussing this matter I had moved an amendment respecting the title of the act in which I had suggested the striking out of the word "emergency" so that the act would be known as the Exchange Conservation Act.

I pointed out at the last sitting of the committee that there was no question that, while the exchange situation between us and the United States was in the nature of an emergency, nevertheless the emergency had now become chronic, and that any attempt to hide the facts of the case would delude the Canadian people in respect of the very essence of our exchange difficulties.

Since then, if anything, the exchange situation has been aggravated by the rapid and startling decline in the security markets of the world. These security markets are a barometer of world trade. They forecast accurately the situation to come, and show more than anything else the situation we are approaching, namely that we are moving from a sellers' to a buyers' market. In other words the international exchange position will be aggravated, as it was during the period of depression in the early part of the thirties.

When I say that I do not anticipate, nor is anything I say now to be so interpreted, that we are entering a period of depression or slump. That is not my intention, nor is it my