

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 20, 1959

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

INQUIRY AS TO RESUMPTION OF DISCUSSION OF BILL NO. C-49

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): On a matter of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister arising out of the exchange which took place last night with regard to parliamentary business. Can he give the house any indication whether we are to follow the order of business mentioned last night, or whether it will be possible to have a change made in order that the business of the house may be more effectively and expeditiously carried out?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): I looked over the record last evening and considered the arguments which were advanced by the hon. member for Laurier. I am at all times desirous of having that spirit of co-operation which has been apparent in the last few days, during which the legislation has received full though somewhat more accelerated consideration than heretofore.

The measure dealing with the national energy board is a very long and important bill, and one which we should like to get through as soon as possible, or as soon as it is convenient. It is a bill which is important to the people in the areas covered by its provisions, but I feel that if the house would agree there should be some further time during which the opposition may acquaint themselves with this very comprehensive piece of legislation. We are all desirous of having it implemented at the earliest possible date, and I suggest that if hon. members have tomorrow to work on it we may proceed on Friday with the consideration of this measure and then carry on next week until it has received the approval of the house or otherwise.

BANKING AND COMMERCE

Fourth report of standing committee on banking and commerce—Mr. Cathers.

SHIPPING

GREAT LAKES—TABLING OF AIDE MEMOIRE ON PILOTAGE

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I should like to table in

English and in French copies of an aide memoire regarding pilotage on the great lakes which was delivered to Washington on Saturday, May 16.

AGRICULTURE

SUGAR BEETS—ANNOUNCEMENT OF CONTINUATION OF SUPPORT PRICE

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I should like to announce that the agricultural stabilization board has been authorized to continue its sugar beet price support on the 1959 crop of sugar beets, with the prescribed price being the same percentage of the 10-year average price as for the 1958 crop, that is 93 per cent. The 1958 sugar crop is not all marketed, but it is expected that there will be some payment since sugar prices have declined in recent months.

For the 1959 crop the amount of payment, if any, will be calculated as the difference between the average gross market price for sugar delivered from each producing area and a prescribed price for Alberta sugar of 9.79 cents per pound, for Manitoba sugar 9.26 cents per pound and for Ontario sugar 7.90 cents per pound. As indicated above, this prescribed price is based on 93 per cent of the 10-year average in Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario, and is about one tenth cent per pound lower than for the 1958 crop due to the fact that the 10-year average has declined. In the case of Quebec, provision has again been made for similar payments per unit, if any, to those made in Ontario.

Present indications are that there will be an increased acreage planted to sugar beets in Ontario and Manitoba this year, with about the same or slightly reduced acreages in Alberta and Quebec. At present it would not appear that sugar prices would improve to any great extent during the current year.

Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, the statement the minister has just made will, I think, bear further examination. I note that while it is based on 93 per cent of the 10-year average the price will be about one-tenth cent per pound lower than for the 1958 crop, and one would want to examine the whole statement in detail.

May I ask the minister if he hopes to be able to pursue this generous mood he has begun today by a statement on soybean prices and on Ontario wheat, perhaps tomorrow?