

*Inquiries of the Ministry*EFFECT OF PRICE INCREASES ON BAKERY
INDUSTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. K. H. More (Regina City): I should like to address a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce and ask him whether he has received representations from the bakery industry or from a consumer group with regard to the impact of the price of sugar upon the final product, specifically bread.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I have not had representations from that particular group, but I have from other groups.

Mr. More: I should like to address a supplementary question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Can he confirm the suggestion I have heard that the annual cost to the bakery industry due to the increase in the price of sugar is \$13 million, and that the net profit of this industry last year was only \$4 million?

Mr. Sharp: I had not heard this, but I thank the hon. gentleman for informing me.

TRANSPORT

RAILWAY BRANCH LINES—DISCUSSIONS WITH
WESTERN PREMIERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Reynold Rapp (Humboldt-Melfort-Tisdale): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport. Will the minister consider meeting with the premiers of the three prairie provinces to discuss the very important question of railroad abandonment, since these gentlemen are presently in Ottawa?

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I have already discussed this problem with the premiers of each of the provinces, but I would be very glad to discuss it with them again if they so wish.

Mr. R. R. Southam (Moose Mountain): As a supplementary question, since a meeting was held last Friday in Regina between officials of the minister's department and officials and members of the Saskatchewan government, would the minister care to give the house a report on that meeting with regard to railway abandonment?

Mr. McIlraith: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if it is proper for me to give a report on that meeting. It was called by the Saskatchewan provincial authorities and officials of my department were sent there only as observers, but I will look into it and see if a report can be given.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I did not hear the broadcast, and I would be exceedingly surprised if the hon. gentleman is accurately informed about it. I assume he did not hear it himself. I know of no basis for the statement that the Atlantic development board is considering helping in the financing of the Hamilton Falls development. I would be very surprised indeed if that had been considered.

SUGAR

PROTECTION OF CANADIAN PRODUCERS IN LONG
TERM AGREEMENTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. W. H. A. Thomas (Middlesex West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. In view of the minister's statements concerning negotiations now going on for future supplies of raw sugar, and in view of his statement that our domestic sugar beet producers will be protected, would he be willing to arrange for representatives of the Canadian sugar beet growers' association to be present at and take part in these negotiations?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for giving me notice of this question. I can assure him at once that I have already had discussions of a very informal character with representatives of the sugar beet producers, but perhaps I might add that officials of my department have received suggestions from various overseas producers, some of them suggesting exploratory discussions, and it is expected that meetings will be held within a few days in Canada. When the nature of the offers from these producers is better understood, and if these offers merit serious consideration, an opportunity will be made for consultations with representatives of the sugar beet producers.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): As a supplementary question, will entering into any such arrangements for the bulk purchase of sugar, with any of the countries which have indicated some interest in this, require legislation, or has the government sufficient authority to proceed with the matter at the present time?

Mr. Sharp: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have not examined this question because I am not certain as yet about the nature of the offers or suggestions that may be made. Hon. members will understand there is a wide variety of possibilities, some of which doubtless would require legislation and some of which might not.