

*Inquiries of the Ministry***WHEAT**

DEFICIT ON 1945-49 POOL ACCOUNT—QUESTION AS TO REFERENCE OF WHEAT BOARD REPORT TO COMMITTEE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. P. E. Wright (Melfort): In the absence of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Yesterday the report of the Canadian wheat board for the crop year 1948-49 was tabled in this house. In exhibit IV it is shown that there is a deficit on the 1945-49 pool account of \$5,235,621.37. In view of this deficit, and of the borrowings which apparently the board has had to make from the banks to meet the last twenty-cent payment made to the farmers, will the Minister of Agriculture or the cabinet have this report placed before the agriculture committee as soon as it is set up, so that the report can be thoroughly studied and the reasons for this deficit ascertained?

Right Hon. J. G. Gardiner (Minister of Agriculture): There is nothing new in the statement which has just been made. The matter was discussed at the time the announcement was made that it would be necessary to borrow some of the money that would have to be paid out at that time. The payment was made on the estimate of what the position would be at the end of the year in order to meet the situation when the farmers required the money before they went into seeding. The same request was made yesterday with regard to this matter as was made last year. In order to meet that situation the money had to be borrowed in advance. There is nothing new about it. It is a condition that has existed in the past.

Mr. Wright: The minister has not answered my question as to whether this report would be placed before the agriculture committee when it was set up. The former minister of trade and commerce had promised that.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gardiner: My understanding is that the Minister of Trade and Commerce in previous years agreed to the submission of the report to the committee, but I think the matter can wait until he comes back and makes his own decision.

Mr. Wright: It has not been done since 1947.

FISHERIES

INQUIRY AS TO EXTENSION OF SMELT SEASON IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

On the orders of the day:

Mr. W. Chester S. McLure (Queens): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries. Why was the extension of the smelt [Mr. St. Laurent.]

fishing season not granted to the Prince Edward Island fishermen as it was to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia fishermen?

Hon. R. W. Mayhew (Minister of Fisheries): I will give an answer tomorrow. I did not know there was any change in the restrictions.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

INQUIRY AS TO SETTING UP OF COMMITTEE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. In view of the representation of the Canadian Legion, is the government considering setting up a special committee on veterans affairs this session?

Hon. Milton F. Gregg (Minister of Veterans Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker.

COMBINES INVESTIGATION ACT

QUESTION AS TO PROSECUTIONS IN THE MATCH INDUSTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. Can he say whether a decision has yet been reached in the matter of prosecuting those connected with the alleged combine in the match industry?

Hon. Stuart S. Garson (Minister of Justice): The answer is yes; a prosecution will be instituted.

(See also page 153.)

NATIONAL DEFENCE

TRANSFER OF ARMY PERSONNEL—HOUSING ACCOMMODATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. H. Ferguson (Simcoe North): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence. In view of the fact that soldiers belonging to the permanent army must obey orders and move where they are directed, and there are men in the ranks with families moving to Ottawa, is any provision being made for the housing of these men, or must they continue to seek any shelter they can possibly obtain and pay exorbitant prices? Is any attempt being made to provide dwellings for these people?

Mr. J. A. Blanche (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of National Defence): In the absence of the minister, may I take this as notice of the question?

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The house resumed, from Tuesday, February 21, consideration of the motion of Mr. F. H. Larson for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech