

STORMS

INQUIRY AS TO REPORTS OF DAMAGE IN
NEWFOUNDLAND

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): I should like to address a question to the Minister of Transport. Has the minister a report to make on the severe storm damage to harbour installations, fishing vessels, etc., in Newfoundland last night, and will the government promise emergency assistance to get the harbours back into full operation as quickly as possible?

Hon. George C. Marler (Minister of Transport): I thank the hon. member for having given me notice of his question. I have no report to make on the subject of storm damage in Newfoundland because the Department of Transport, up to now, has received no notification of damage to aids to navigation in St. John's harbour or any other part of that province. The hon. member, I am sure, will appreciate that I can answer only for the facilities that come under the jurisdiction of my department.

SUPERANNUATED CIVIL SERVANTS

INQUIRY AS TO INCREASE IN PENSIONS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Finance? Has the minister, since he took over his new and important portfolio, received representations asking for increases in the pensions of superannuated civil servants, particularly for those whose pensions are in the lower and middle brackets? Has the minister given consideration to these representations?

Hon. W. E. Harris (Minister of Finance): The answer is, yes, I did receive a few representations. When I heard my hon. friend was going to ask the question today I read some of his remarks, not all, on the subject and felt I could not add very much to what the minister of finance at that time said in answer to the hon. member—that was on March 2, 1954.

Mr. Knowles: Then the new minister is no better than the other one was.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

INQUIRY AS TO AGENDA FOR CONFERENCE OF
PRIME MINISTERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Donald M. Fleming (Eglinton): May I ask the Prime Minister if he is able to say anything further as to the precise agenda to

Unemployment Insurance Act

come before the conference of commonwealth prime ministers at London at the end of the month?

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker, I am not.

PUBLIC SERVICE

RESIGNATION OF DR. L. B. THOMSON AS DIRECTOR
OF P.F.R.A.

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Is the Prime Minister in a position to give an answer now regarding the resignation of Mr. Thomson and also whether a civil servant appointed under an order in council is in a different position from one appointed under the civil service commission in so far as his rights are concerned?

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): No; I have not yet obtained all the information I am seeking to obtain.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

AMENDMENTS INCREASING SUPPLEMENTARY
BENEFITS

Hon. Milton F. Gregg (Minister of Labour) moved that the house go into committee to consider the following resolution:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act to raise the rates of supplementary benefit to the present rates of regular benefit and to provide a minimum of sixty days' supplementary benefit to those who qualify.

He said: His Excellency the Governor General, having been made acquainted with the subject matter of this resolution, recommends it to the house.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. Robinson (Simcoe East) in the chair.

Mr. Gregg: I am grateful to the members on all sides of the house, Mr. Chairman, for giving the right of way to this resolution today. The resolution itself, as it appears on the order paper, is practically self-explanatory so I am going to be quite brief. The purpose of it, of course, is to help to mitigate some of the hardships caused by winter unemployment. If we are to judge by last year's experience, this revision of the supplementary benefits will help a good deal.

Back in the early winter of 1950 my colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin), then temporarily acting as minister of labour, introduced for the first time these supplementary benefits, which came into effect in the late part of