

GRAIN

DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS—REQUEST FOR
STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister arising out of the urgent need for deficiency payments on grain.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Argue: My question is asked today because of the answer given in the house on this subject yesterday by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who said there would be an answer to this whole problem just as soon as the Prime Minister was back in Ottawa. I am sure that western Canada is waiting for a statement by the Prime Minister.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): I may say that the Prime Minister was absent for the same reason the Minister of Transport is absent today, namely as the responsible minister in connection with the visit of Princess Margaret, and I say this particularly in view of the rather facetious question which was raised a moment ago by the hon. member for Skeena.

In so far as the question raised by the hon. member for Assiniboia is concerned, that matter will naturally receive the earliest possible attention, and information will be communicated to the house when a decision is able to be communicated.

Mr. Argue: In view of the statement made by the Minister of Trade and Commerce yesterday that on his return a statement would be made by the Prime Minister in answer to this whole problem—

Mr. Speaker: I do not think the hon. member should attempt to argue the sufficiency of the answer. After all, whether or not an answer is given is a voluntary matter.

Mr. Argue: Then I will ask a supplementary question. Can the Prime Minister say whether a statement will be made within a few days, as was indicated by the Minister of Trade and Commerce?

Mr. Diefenbaker: It will be made at the earliest possible date.

DOMINION-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

NEWFOUNDLAND—SALE OF CANADA HOUSE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. R. Tucker (Trinity-Conception): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works. Is it the intention of the government to sell the house

Children of War Dead Act

now occupied by the premier of Newfoundland, known as Canada house?

Hon. Howard C. Green (Minister of Public Works): I will have to take that question as notice.

CHILDREN OF WAR DEAD ACT

AMENDMENT TO INCREASE ALLOWANCE AND
EXTEND BENEFITS

Hon. A. J. Brooks (Minister of Veterans Affairs) moved that the house go into committee to consider the following resolution:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the Children of War Dead (Education Assistance) Act so as to extend the benefits of the act to other classes of persons and to increase the allowance that may be paid in certain cases.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. Rea in the chair.

Mr. Chevrier: Will the minister make a statement?

Mr. Brooks: Mr. Chairman, this resolution has to do with amendments to the Children of War Dead (Education Assistance) Act. Hon. members will recall that this act was given royal assent in May, 1953. Its basic purpose is to ensure that children are not deprived of higher education because of their father's death, where the death is determined by the Canadian pension commission to be related to service.

Briefly, the act provides for the payment, up to the age of 25 years, on behalf of a child who is following a course of higher education, of tuition fees and an allowance of \$25 a month is granted for a period of four academic years or 36 months, whichever is the lesser.

The number of children who have already received benefits under this act has been somewhat higher than had been estimated, and that is all to the good. During the course of administration of the act certain anomalies and deficiencies have come to light, and it is hoped that these will be remedied by the proposed amendments which are contained in the bill to be introduced if this resolution is adopted. I shall now indicate very briefly the purport of these amendments.

The Deputy Chairman: I wonder if I could ask hon. members to lower their voices. It is impossible to hear the minister.

Mr. Brooks: Eligibility under the present act is restricted to a child on whose behalf a pension is being, or has been, paid because the parent's death is connected with war service. This has been found to be too restrictive. For example, it excludes a child who is over the age of 21 years at the time of the parent's death and who is already pursuing a course