

Inquiries of the Ministry

Minister of Justice. Has his attention been drawn to a very disturbing situation in the retail tobacco trade in Vancouver which seems to be induced by special discounts to large distributors?

Hon. Stuart S. Garson (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my hon. friend for giving me notice of his question. The director under the Combines Investigation Act is conducting a general inquiry into the possible existence and extent of discriminatory pricing and its effect, particularly upon the smaller independent retailers.

In the course of this study cigarette prices will be considered as well as the prices of a large number of other representative commodities. The situations in Winnipeg and Vancouver have been brought to the director's attention and he is gathering information about them in connection with the study I have mentioned and also in connection with a study of "loss-leading" which the director is also carrying out. These are general studies and that is why I am in a position to refer to them. As to whether the director is investigating any particular industry upon suspicion of contravention of the Combines Investigation Act or the related sections of the Criminal Code, I cannot, for the reasons that I have so often explained in this house, disclose information in advance of any report that may be made.

NATIONAL DEFENCE**RIFLE RANGE AND OTHER PROJECTS AT BAIE-DU-FEBVRE, QUE.—PROTESTS AGAINST INSTALLATION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Leon Balcer (Three Rivers): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence. Has the minister received any protests against the installation of a rifle range and other defence projects at Baie-du-Febvre, Quebec; and if so, what is the Department of National Defence going to do about them?

Hon. Brooke Claxton (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I have not had notice of this question. I shall be glad to take the question as notice and look into it.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**INQUIRY AS TO INTRODUCTION OF AMENDMENTS TO ACT**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Labour arising out of a Canadian Press dispatch of a day

or two ago. Is it the intention of the government to introduce at this session amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act so as to provide for the continuation of unemployment insurance benefits to recipients who are taken ill while on benefit?

Hon. Milton F. Gregg (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, while I join with all hon. members in welcoming back to the house the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, I am not in a position to answer his first question on his return.

Mr. Knowles: I would rather have had an answer than the welcome.

FISHERIES**INCREASE IN CARAPACE MEASUREMENT OF LOBSTERS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. W. Chester S. McLure (Queens): Mr. Speaker, arising out of an answer given yesterday by the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Fisheries there is a question that I now wish to direct to him. Did the lobster fishermen of Prince Edward Island ask for the carapace measurement of lobsters to be increased to 2½ inches for canning purposes? This is an extremely serious matter at the opening of the season.

Mr. J. Watson MacNaught (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Fisheries): Mr. Speaker, I shall have to take the hon. member's question as notice and give an answer tomorrow.

EXCISE TAX ACT**LETTER FROM FISHERIES COUNCIL OF CANADA**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Jean Lesage (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the senior member for Queens (Mr. McLure) asked whether the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) had received a letter from the fisheries council of Canada in which certain representations were made with regard to the Excise Tax Act. I may say that the Minister of Finance yesterday received a letter from that council dated March 23. The representations therein contained had already been submitted to the government by the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Sinclair). They are now under consideration and I should be in a position to comment on them tomorrow, I hope, when we reach consideration of the amendments to the Excise Tax Act.