

Inquiries of the Ministry

mission on trade and employment. In view of the many assignments being given Mr. Dana Wilgress, whom I regard as well fitted for them, may I ask if he will soon be returning to his post as Canadian ambassador to Moscow, or is consideration being given to the appointment of someone else in his place?

Right Hon. L. S. ST. LAURENT (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No decision has been made with respect to that matter. When a decision is made it will be announced promptly.

NAILS

ALLEGED SHORTAGE ON PACIFIC COAST

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. C. GREEN (Vancouver South): Reports from the Pacific coast indicate a serious shortage of nails there. Can the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply make any statement with regard to the situation?

Right Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Reconstruction and Supply): I have not heard of a shortage of nails in any part of Canada during the past two months.

Mr. FRASER: You have not been around, then; for there is a shortage.

Mr. HOWE: The fact of the matter is that there was a shortage last year, for several reasons, the principal of which was the strike in the steel industry. The limiting factor today is the amount of wire rod that can be devoted to the making of nails. The rod making capacity of Canada is being operated to the fullest extent, and the nail making capacity is being operated to the extent that rods can be made available. I might add that steel rods are being supplemented by aluminum rods, which make a satisfactory nail for some purposes. I have just received from the statistical department a forecast of production which indicates that whereas the production of nails in 1946 was 59,000 tons, production for 1947 is estimated at 72,000 tons, an increase of twenty-two per cent. I can assure my hon. friend that the industry is today operating at the rate of 72,000 tons of nails per annum, which should more than satisfy the requirements of Canada.

Mr. FRASER: How many nails were exported?

Mr. HOWE: There is, and for many months has been, a prohibition against export of nails from Canada.

[Mr. Knowles.]

INCOME TAX

COMPULSORY SAVINGS—REQUEST FOR REPAYMENT
IN ADVANCE TO PERSONS IN NEED

On the orders of the day:

Mr. ANGUS MacINNIS (Vancouver East): Will the Department of Finance give consideration to advancing the date of payment of compulsory savings to persons in need? I am being inundated with letters from people in need.

Hon. DOUGLAS ABBOTT (Minister of Finance): I shall be glad to give consideration to that matter.

MEAT

INQUIRY AS TO DISCONTINUANCE OF RATIONING

On the orders of the day:

Mr. DONALD M. FLEMING (Eglinton): I should like to ask the Minister of Finance if the discontinuance of meat rationing is in contemplation; and, if so, when?

Hon. DOUGLAS ABBOTT (Minister of Finance): The question has not been considered. When a decision is made it will be announced in due course.

WAR SAVINGS CERTIFICATES

QUESTION AS TO PAYMENT BY CHARTERED BANKS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. K. FRASER (Peterborough West): Will the Minister of Finance say whether the chartered banks will be allowed to cash war savings certificates when the first of them become due, which will be within a few months? I understand that according to P.C. 306, dated January 28, only the post office will be allowed to do so.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

FEED GRAIN

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT AS TO PRICES OF BARLEY
AND FLAX

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. A. ROSS (Souris): I want to direct a question to the appropriate minister; I am not quite sure who it may be. When will an announcement be made with respect to the price of barley and flax for the 1947 production? Many farmers are anxious to make their seed arrangements for the approaching season.

Right Hon. J. G. GARDINER (Minister of Agriculture): The whole policy in connection