

Race Track Employees

CANADA-GERMANY TRADE AGREEMENT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. SAMUEL FACTOR (Toronto West Centre): I should like to ask the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Stevens) if the trade agreement between Canada and Germany, which I understand expired last month, has been renewed by the government and, if so, when it was renewed and for what term.

Hon. H. H. STEVENS (Minister of Trade and Commerce): The understanding with Germany—it is not a trade agreement—was extended about a month ago, and some statement in that connection was made in the house. I think it has been extended for a period of six months.

RACE TRACK EMPLOYEES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. ECCLES J. GOTT (South Essex): Mr. Speaker, according to press reports of yesterday the Minister of Immigration (Mr. Gordon) is expected to modify the restrictions against United States citizens entering Canada to work on Canadian Racing Association tracks as pari-mutuel operators. I should like to ask the minister what is the intention of the government with regard to the employment in Canada of United States citizens in this connection, in view of the fact that Canadian citizens are barred from employment on the tracks in the United States.

Hon. W. A. GORDON (Acting Minister of Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the question of the interchange of labour between Canada and the United States, as I think every hon. member knows, has come up with respect to many industries and activities. It is difficult to adopt any course that will not at times give rise to irritation or cause some people to feel that the division is not fair as between the two countries. With respect to the employment of people on race tracks—and I may tell hon. members that I am not at all acquainted with race tracks and their operation—I had this question before me last year and again this year. I am not prepared to subscribe to what my hon. friend says with regard to the exclusion of Canadians from United States tracks, though I would not care to deny that there has been some restriction in that regard. There are many more tracks in the United States than there are in Canada, and Canadians are employed on United States tracks. The number of United States citizens employed on Canadian tracks the year before last was about one hundred. Last year that

[Mr. Gordon.]

number was greatly reduced, and this year a further reduction has been made, so that there will not be more than fifteen such officials employed.

Hon. members must realize that the operation of a race track is a highly specialized business, and one cannot become acquainted with all its complexities in the course of a few weeks. For instance, a steward is a very special man, and so also is a starter; these men are trained for their work. An assistant starter does dangerous work at times, I am told, and it has been suggested to me also that sometimes the finisher finds himself in a very precarious situation. I can assure my hon. friend, however, that the whole subject has been given very careful review, having regard to the possibility of employing Canadian labour and also having regard to the fact that huge sums of money have been invested in race tracks in this country. I do not think it would be advisable for the government to adopt such a course as would be likely to render impossible the carrying on of the sport, so called. Yesterday I did take some action; it was indicated to me that a special man was necessary, and I allowed that man to enter on condition that the race track employ at once four unemployed Canadians who would be taught how to do the work. We must take action such as this at times, and as each case arises the responsibility is mine to see that the best course is followed, having regard to the interests of everyone concerned and particularly the interests of those unemployed in Canada who are capable of carrying on the work.

TARIFF BOARD—APPLICATIONS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. F. G. SANDERSON (South Perth): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Rhodes) in regard to the new tariff board. Could the minister tell the house what applications for hearings have been received from Canadian and British firms? If the minister has not the information before him perhaps he would give me an answer to-morrow.

Hon. E. N. RHODES (Minister of Finance): Obviously I will have to ask that my hon. friend's question stand as a notice, and I will give an answer to-morrow.

INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon. E. N. RHODES (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it is desirable that we should have interim supply. Therefore I would ask the unanimous consent of the house for the