

Inquiries of the Ministry

As I explained the other day, when objection was taken to that procedure, I said that perhaps we might have to revise that ruling which was then made.

If hon. members do not go beyond what was contemplated at that time, and what was in the mind of Mr. Speaker Macdonald, that is to give an opportunity to make a few observations upon a statement being made by a minister, I think we might perhaps keep the present system. But if abuses take place, then it would not be proper for hon. members to follow this practice any longer.

I think that answers the point raised by the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I simply wish to keep the record clear as to what is under consideration. There is no provision in Beauchesne in regard to the system being introduced by the ministers. We have indicated our desire that a measure of flexibility be retained. We have indicated our hope that ministers will have the opportunity to make statements, and we have pointed out that we are ready to accord that consent just so long as there is an opportunity to make observations in reply to them.

Our only alternative, if that were to be denied to us, would be to refuse consent to any of the ministers to make statements; and that would not be desirable. This is simply a question of bringing about greater flexibility in our proceedings in the house. And I had only expressed the hope that the Minister of Justice would reconsider the position he has taken, and remember that if extradition proceedings are to be taken there should be a provision in the Criminal Code dealing with trafficking in children or in human beings.

WATER POLLUTION**NORTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER—INQUIRY AS TO FURTHER ACTION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. A. M. Campbell (The Battlefords): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Has the minister received a report from Dr. Charron regarding his investigation of pollution of the water in the North Saskatchewan river? If so, would the minister indicate the nature of such report? Also, has the minister received a reply to the telegram he sent to Dr. Cross on Wednesday, and would he also indicate the nature of any reply which may have been received?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the house will recall that the hon. member for Rosthern (Mr. Tucker) asked me whether or not I had received a reply to the question my hon. friend now asks. I have had a reply from the minister of health which says that he is sending us a report with regard to past, future and present activities in connection with this matter, on the part of his government. And the minister of health in Saskatchewan telephoned this morning to say that he has just returned from Edmonton, where he conferred with the minister of health and our officials, and departmental officials of the government of Alberta, and is satisfied that everything is being done to meet the situation.

WHEAT**PRICE OF SUPPLIES MADE AVAILABLE TO MILLING COMPANIES**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. H. Castleden (Yorkton): I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Is wheat to be made available to any Canadian milling companies at the reduced lakehead price announced yesterday by the minister?

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Trade and Commerce): The price announced for wheat at the lakehead is available to any purchaser who buys wheat in store at the lakehead.

BUTTER**REDUCTION IN UNITED STATES PARITY PRICE—EFFECT ON CANADIAN PRICES**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. E. Anderson (Norfolk): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Recent press reports state that the support price of butter will be reduced eight cents a pound in the United States, effective April 1, 1954. Can the minister inform the house what effect, if any, this action will have on our own market?

Right Hon. J. G. Gardiner (Minister of Agriculture): I wish to thank the hon. member for giving me a copy of his question and to state that within the last few days we have been notified from Washington that the government has taken the position that in future on a number of articles, one of which is butter, they will reduce the support price from 95 per cent of parity to 75 per cent of parity. That will result in butter going down about eight cents a pound as compared with