

## REPORTED IN PARLIAMENT BRIEFLY

**COUNTERACT COMMUNISTS:** The Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, announced in the House of Commons on March 7 that the Department of Justice is studying legislation dealing with the possibility of taking effective action to counteract the activities of communist parties. His statement was made in response to a question by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Drew. The Hansard record is, in part, as follows:

Mr. Drew: I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the statements made during the past two weeks by the national leaders of communist parties throughout the world, to the effect it is their intention to sabotage preparations for defence and assist the Soviet Union in the event of war, is the Government prepared to announce any steps, by way of legislation or otherwise, to deal effectively with this pattern of treason which has been disclosed?

Mr. St. Laurent: The Leader of the Opposition was kind enough to write me a lengthy letter dealing with the background which prompted his question. In answer may I say that these matters are constantly under careful surveillance by the Department of External Affairs. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will not mind my saying that his letter contained a suggestion that a statement had been made in Canada by Tim Buck. I should like to ask him if he would indicate to me when that statement was made, because I have inquired about it and we have no knowledge of any recent statement by him. The exact form and terms of any such statement would be a matter of concern, because it might constitute an overt act which would come within the existing provisions of the Criminal Code.

I might add that there is a bill on the order paper--it is being carefully examined by the law officers of the Department of Justice--dealing with the possibility of taking effective action to counteract the activities of communist parties. The Department of Justice has not yet made its report on that proposed legislation or on like measures adopted in other countries, and the practical effect of such legislation. I should be obliged to the leader of the opposition if he would call to my attention, either here or by some other means, any recent statement of a communist leader in Canada, because it would be given careful scrutiny to ascertain whether it fell within the provisions of the Criminal Code.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I do not think the Prime Minister will object if I read one sentence in my letter to which he referred:

"The uniform pattern of these statements gives a new meaning and an entirely different significance to a similar statement made by the Leader of the Canadian communist party, Tim Buck, some time ago."

The occasion to which I referred was a speech Tim Buck was reported to have made in Vancouver on November 13, 1946. As I pointed out, this was not a recent happening--

Mr. St. Laurent: In 1946?

Mr. Drew: It occurred in 1946, but it gains a new meaning in the light of this recent pattern which has been announced. The reports of that speech stated that Tim Buck had publicly stated he would not defend Canada in the event of war with the Soviet, but would in fact follow the same course as he had followed during the past war. This report was carried extensively by the press at that time. I would be glad to furnish the Prime Minister with the reference to the clippings, if they are not already available to him.

Mr. St. Laurent: I am sure the clippings are available, and I will have them looked at. My chief concern was whether it was something as far back as that, or something more recent.

**COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE:** The Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, in the House of Commons on March 7, answered a question from the member for Vancouver South, Mr. Green, as to whether the adjourned Commonwealth Conference which was to take place in Ceylon in May, might now be held in Ottawa in April. Question and answer were as follows:

Mr. Green: Apparently the Daily Telegraph of London, England, this morning carried a dispatch, which has been reprinted in certain Canadian papers, to the effect that the adjourned Commonwealth Conference to deal primarily with Pacific and Far Eastern questions, which was to take place in Ceylon in May, may now be held in Ottawa in April. Is the Prime Minister prepared to make a statement with regard to that dispatch?

Mr. St. Laurent: I am prepared to state that no such arrangements have been made.

Mr. Green: May I ask the Prime Minister a supplementary question? Can he say whether the Conference is to take place in May? If so, where is it to be held, or is there to be any further meeting?

Mr. St. Laurent: There was a suggestion that a Conference of Ministers of External Affairs might be held in Ceylon some time in May, 1949. It is not to be held in May, 1949. Correspondence is proceeding at the present time to determine whether it will be held at a later date, or whether there will be an opportunity for something that would take its place at the time of the meeting of the United Nations in the autumn of 1949.

**ALASKA HIGHWAY OUTLET:** Parliament will be asked at the present session, for funds to assist in the construction of a 58-mile, all-weather road as an outlet to the Alaska High-

way for the people of Atlin, B.C., the Minister of Mines and Resources, Mr. MacKinnon, announced on March 7. Thirty-two miles of the proposed road are in British Columbia and it is anticipated that an agreement respecting the construction of the road will be reached shortly between the federal and British Columbia Governments.

The Atlin District is known to contain extensive mineral resources and is considered favourable prospecting ground, and the lack of year-round transportation is adversely affecting development operations. Atlin is located in the northwestern corner of the province and the Yukon provides the only outlet. Present means of transport between Atlin and the Yukon is by boat, for about four months in the summer, and by aeroplane. For a short time during the winter tractor trains carry freight.

**SUB-AMENDMENT DEFEATED:** By a vote of 174 to 39, the House of Commons, on March 9, defeated a C.C.F. no-confidence motion, presented as a sub-amendment in the debate on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. In the division the Government was supported by the Progressive Conservative party and two Quebec Independents, while the Social Credit group voted with the C.C.F. Still to be voted upon at this writing are no-confidence motions by the Progressive Conservative and Social Credit parties.

The C.C.F. sub-amendment would have had the House regret "that Your Excellency's advisers

**RESTITUTION COURTS:** The Department of External Affairs has announced that special courts (called "chambers") have been established throughout the French Zone of Occupation in Germany to hear claims for the restitution of property situated in that area.

Canadian citizens or persons residing in Canada who have such claims should submit their requests for the institution of legal proceedings directly to the appropriate court on or before May 15, 1949; otherwise, their claims may be barred.

Full information on the procedure to be followed may be obtained from the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa.

**INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT:** Industrial employment showed a pronounced seasonal recession between December 1 and January 1. Curtailment of outdoor work, shut-downs during the holiday season and for inventory purposes contributed to the contraction which was common to all provinces. The drop in employment was accompanied by a substantial falling-off as compared with December 1 in the weekly salaries and wages distributed by the co-operating establishments.

have failed to make provision for the orderly marketing of natural products and for their exchange for goods much needed in Canada and for the elimination of speculation in food-stuffs. We further regret that Your Excellency's advisers have failed to make provision for national health insurance."

**FUNDY NATIONAL PARK:** Parliament will be asked to approve of "Fundy National Park" as the name of New Brunswick's new 80-square mile scenic and recreational area, in legislation to be presented by the Minister of Mines and Resources, Mr. MacKinnon.

The name was chosen by Hon. J.B. McNair, Premier of New Brunswick, from among entries in an essay contest held throughout provincial schools to select a title for the park.

Overlooking the Bay of Fundy, the property was donated by the Province and officially proclaimed a national park in April, 1948. Substantial improvements have been carried out by the National Parks Service; administration buildings erected; road and trails reconstructed and improved. Plans are well underway for a salt water swimming pool, nine-hole golf course, tennis courts, and a bowling green.

Accommodation for visitors will be provided by hotels and bungalow cabins operated by private enterprise.

The official opening of Fundy National Park is expected to take place some time during the coming summer.

The loss of 3.4 per cent in employment reported by the 19,704 firms furnishing information to the Bureau of Statistics in the eight principal industrial groups was larger than at the beginning of 1948 or any earlier year since 1941, but was below pre-war years.

The index number of employment declined from 204.3 in December to 197.3 at the beginning of January -- highest in the record for that date -- and compares with 193.7 a year ago. The sums distributed at January 1 in weekly salaries and wages were lower by 6.1 per cent than at the beginning of December, and the per capita weekly figure declined from \$42.23 to \$41.03.

The level of employment in communications was slightly higher than at December 1 and there was an increase of 0.8 per cent in retail trade. The general trend in the remaining industrial groups was downward. The greatest percentage losses were in transportation, logging and construction in which they amounted to 2.6 per cent, 7.7 per cent, and 11.6 per cent, respectively. In manufacturing there was a contraction of 2.4 per cent, and in mining 2.5 per cent.