

agreement to the extent of frustrating the preferences upon oil from the British dominion of Trinidad.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Leader of the Opposition): To what date did my right hon. friend refer at the beginning of his remarks?

Mr. BENNETT: I referred to the debate on May 28, 1928, in which the right hon. gentleman referring to certain observations made by the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa), dealt with the action of the Dominion government in severing relations with Russia. He referred then to the fact that the necessity for this action had arisen as a consequence of certain action taken by the British government to terminate the relationship then existing between Great Britain and the Soviet republics. As the right hon. gentleman pointed out, the action taken here was taken at about the same time. As he pointed out then, and as I assume has been known to every hon. member of the house, such action did not stop trading between Russia and Canada or Canada and Russia. The prohibition contained in the order in council of February, 1931, referred to the importation into this country of the articles and commodities which I have named. There seems to have been an idea abroad that the action taken by this country which terminated diplomatic relations between Canada and Russia, terminated all trade between the two countries. The right hon. gentleman pointed out in 1928 that such was not the case, and there have been no changes from that date to this except those incident to the passing of the order in council prohibiting the importation into this country of the commodities I have named. As I have said already, a subsequent order in council defined furs as being furs in a partly fabricated condition.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I thank the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett) for giving this explanation because it should be clearly understood that the 1928 negotiations, or whatever they may be termed, related only to certain diplomatic privileges which had previously been granted exclusively to Russia and which were withdrawn at the time mentioned.

Hon. IAN MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): Has it been determined yet by the government that this oil is to pay a duty?

Mr. BENNETT: The oil paid duty. The question was as to whether or not it came

strictly within an item in the tariff, there being in the tariff a provision for free entry into this country of crude petroleum. Then petroleum, not crude, but of a certain specific gravity, was subject to a rate of duty, not being free. The question was whether that would be a proper classification of this particular quality of oil or whether it should be designated a type of gasoline because of its high quality content, and the fact that it was alleged—and this is still under investigation—that it did not require to be refined to produce gasoline, but had only to be rectified which was not refining within the meaning of the section, there being, as will be remembered by the house, a provision in the agreement providing for entry into this country on specified terms of oil from the British Empire. That meant oil from Trinidad which is coming into Canada, which is not crude in its natural form or state, but which is a mixture of crude and other petroleum products.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. CAMERON R. McINTOSH (North Battleford): I have a question to direct to the Minister of Labour. I understand a special committee is investigating the administration of the Pension Act as accepted by parliament under the old government in 1930. So far as I can see, no attention has been paid to the investigation of problems concerning returned men on the land throughout Canada. My question is: Does the minister or his department intend to have soldier settlement conditions across Canada investigated by a special committee of parliament later in the session?

Hon. W. A. GORDON (Minister of Labour): This is the first intimation I have had from any source that there was any desire on anybody's part for such a committee to investigate. The hon. member, in referring to the position of returned soldiers upon the land is, I take it, referring to what are commonly called soldier settlers. The condition of these men is constantly under review by the field staff of the soldier settlement board, land settlement branch. If the hon. member knows of any difficulties which are not now under review, I should be very glad if he would make known those difficulties to me. They will be promptly investigated, and if any injustice is being done, which I greatly doubt, by the department, it will be immediately rectified.