

Mr. SPEAKER: I think this is a question which should be placed on the order paper. Already it has been the subject of discussion, not in this but in a similar form, and since it is a question having to do with a declaration of intention on the part of the government, I do not think it should be asked on the orders of the day.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: If I may be permitted a word, I believe a decision should be reached by the government; representations have been made, and I suggest, with the utmost respect, that this is a matter of very great importance to many farmers in the western provinces.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must say that I am not impressed by the argument that the question should be answered now. I think it certainly is a question that should be placed on the order paper.

#### MILITARY CAMPS

##### FIRE AT BARRIEFIELD—REPORTS AS TO EFFICACY OF FIRE-FIGHTING APPARATUS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. L. RALSTON (Minister of National Defence): The other day the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Shaw) asked whether a report he had heard was well founded, to the effect that the available fire-fighting apparatus at Barriefield military camp had proved useless on the occasion of a recent fire. I want to say to him—and I only mention it now in order that it may be on the record—that the reports I have received indicate that the available fire-fighting apparatus operated most efficiently. I shall be glad to show the hon. member a copy of those reports.

#### LABOUR CONDITIONS

##### EMPLOYMENT IN INDUSTRY OF WOMEN OVER THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. H. BLACKMORE (Lethbridge): I desire to direct a question to the Minister of Labour based on a letter which reached me from Vancouver this morning, from which I quote:

In Vancouver there are many munitions workers available and anxious to play their part. The age limit of thirty-five years for war emergency training excludes hundreds of efficient women. I have written to Hon. Mr.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Mitchell, but his reply is that all training is sponsored by employers. That can hardly be the case. The government pays so much per week per student while training, and should have some say regarding the selecting of students. This is total war, or should be, and every woman should be working, regardless of age. The above unit have a membership of three hundred, all skilled in the manufacture of munitions, yet to date only sixteen of them are in the plants, due to my personal efforts and contacts. If you can do anything—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The hon. member is reading a long letter in support of his question, which is in somewhat the same category as one already asked this afternoon. I should regard that as a notice to the minister to make reply to-morrow or at such other time as he may see fit.

Mr. MITCHELL: I would rather get it out of the way now.

Mr. SPEAKER: A question improperly asked may not be improperly answered.

#### WAYS AND MEANS

##### INCOME WAR TAX ACT

The house in committee of ways and means, Mr. Vien in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Resolution 1, part I.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: With regard to what was the defence tax, is it the intention to tax labour which receives less than the minima of \$660 for single and \$1,200 for married men under the new regulations?

Mr. ILSLEY: No.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: It is intended to collect the tax at the source, as was done previously?

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: How much money was collected last year under these regulations, from persons who, as it turned out later, had not reached the minimum requirements for taxation?

Mr. ILSLEY: The information is not available at the moment, and I am doubtful whether it would be possible to get it. To answer the question it would be necessary to tell the hon. gentleman not only what was refunded because it turned out that the person paying was earning less than the minimum, but also the amount which should be refunded, and that information is not complete.