

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, June 28, 1956

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

INDUSTRY

KRUPPS—PRESS REPORT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF BRANCH PLANT IN CANADA

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister. I can assure him it has nothing to do with wheat or box cars. Can the minister inform the house whether there is any truth in press reports that the infamous Krupps intend to establish a branch steel plant in Canada?

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have heard no suggestion that Krupp is to establish a steel plant in Canada. I have read press reports, but I am quite certain that had there been any serious plans I would have heard of them, and I have not.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

A. V. ROE LIMITED—REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION IN LAY-OFFS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. John Pallett (Peel): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Defence Production. Can the minister inform the house if he is taking any steps to ensure that A. V. Roe workers will not be laid off as the result of a cut-back in the production of the CF-100?

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Defence Production): Mr. Speaker, the government has found it necessary to cut back the production schedule of CF-100 aircraft at A. V. Roe starting later in the year. However, A. V. Roe is a private plant and the government would have no voice in the disposition of its labour; that is a matter for A. V. Roe.

Mr. Pallett: May I ask a supplementary question? Is the minister aware of the representation that was made in this house that steps would be taken to ensure that there be no troughs of unemployment in the aircraft industry or that the working force would be maintained?

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): I am not suggesting that the cut-back represents a trough in aircraft work. I stated yesterday that the

aircraft program initiated five years ago has now been completed and that the work of the aircraft plants will be to provide replacements for the aircraft that have already been built. In the case of A. V. Roe a new plane is coming into production in a year or two, but I would not regard the present lay-off as a trough. I think it likely that the lower level of employment will endure for some time.

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct to the Minister of Defence Production a question somewhat related to the questions which were asked earlier in regard to the cut-back of production in the A. V. Roe plant. Will the government call a conference, representative of labour, management and government, to discuss the situation involved in this pending lay-off, as is being requested by the union concerned, and in line with the previous undertaking given by the government in this connection?

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I know of no undertaking given by the government that a meeting between A. V. Roe, its employees and the government would be called to discuss lay-offs. A. V. Roe is a private plant and has a contract with its employees, which contract I assume will be carried out. The Department of Defence Production orders the aircraft that the Department of National Defence indicate as required from week to week. The labour relations within the plant are not within the purview of this government.

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce in connection with the question I asked him a few minutes ago. Would the minister care to check with the Department of Labour with respect to the statement that the government gave no undertaking to call a tripartite conference in view of the information that has been received by hon. members today by telegram that in January 1955 such an undertaking was given with respect to the future lay-off plan?