

Inquiries of the Ministry

its forms, whether in the Soviet union or elsewhere throughout the world.

Despite our concern, we have not made representations to the Soviet embassy on the specific question of anti-semitism in the U.S.S.R. If such representations were contemplated the more appropriate channel would be to make an approach directly to the Soviet authorities through the Canadian embassy in Moscow. However, I should remind my right hon. friend who asked the question of the fact that there is in the Soviet union a deep-seated suspicion of cosmopolitanism, that is a mistrust of elements in the population and particularly of minority and religious elements which the Soviet authorities fear might have international connections and loyalties which could conflict with their allegiance to the U.S.S.R. Because of this consideration, Mr. Speaker, the present government, as did the previous administration, wishes to avoid any official action which, by emphasizing the Soviet suspicion of the international affiliation of the Jews, might provoke further restrictions against the Jewish community in the U.S.S.R.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): May I ask a supplementary question. Can the Prime Minister ascertain whether there has been correspondence between the government and the Canadian Jewish Congress on this matter, and if so, could the correspondence be tabled?

Mr. Pearson: Yes, Mr. Speaker, there has been correspondence on this matter, but I am not familiar with the details of it at the moment. However, I shall be glad to collect that and see if it could be tabled.

NATO—U.S. REPRESENTATIONS RESPECTING TRADE
WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that the Prime Minister, while he was on his feet, would make some reference to the question that was asked yesterday about the NATO ministerial conference and the position which Canada is taking with reference to the United States proposal to curtail credits to the Soviet union to a period of five years.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Now that I am on my feet again Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to say a word about that. I had intended to because, as my hon. friend knows, I was asked yesterday whether any representations had been received by the Canadian government from the United States government concerning the need for general agreement among NATO nations on trade with the communist block.

[Mr. Pearson.]

While no direct representations have been received on this subject from the United States government, we have been kept informed of United States thinking on this and it was, of course, the subject of discussion at a special meeting of the NATO council on Monday of this week, at which the Secretary of State for External Affairs was present and at which the United States delegate made a proposal concerning the undesirability—and I am just paraphrasing what he said—of granting credits for trade with communist countries beyond a five year period.

The Canadian delegate, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, joined the United Kingdom and certain Scandinavian delegates in opposing that proposal. My hon. friend the Secretary of State for External Affairs will be back in the house tomorrow, or at the latest on Friday, and he will make a more extended statement on this matter at that time.

SUGAR

REQUEST FOR ACTION RESPECTING RISING PRICES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Prime Minister. The question is somewhat unusual, but it is of urgent and country-wide importance. Has the Prime Minister received representations from some of his supporters in this house urging him to adopt the New Democratic party price control policy on sugar by the introduction of a measure to give effect to such policy? Is so, what action does he intend to take?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the only representations I have received to adopt the policies of the New Democratic party have been from members of that party themselves. On this particular point I have not received the representation my hon. friend talked about, but I do note, as no doubt he has noted, that the price of sugar has dropped \$1.80 per hundred in the last day or two.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): A supplementary question. A week ago the Minister of Trade and Commerce indicated that negotiations were going on with the sugar exporting countries in the commonwealth regarding the possibility of Canada entering into an agreement for the bulk purchase of sugar at a negotiated price. Are those consultations continuing? What progress is being made, and how soon is the government expecting to make a contract with the sugar industry?

Mr. Pearson: Negotiations are going on. I will bring my hon. friend's question to the attention of the minister, who is not in the