

Army Supplies

from Vancouver in to-day's *Ottawa Journal* that the British Columbia regional war labour board has announced that it will not approve any wage increases above ten cents an hour until the parliamentary committee on industrial relations has reported. I would ask the minister whether his department was informed of this decision and whether any directive went out from his office in regard to it.

Hon. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (Minister of Labour): I have not seen the report in the newspaper, but I shall be glad to make inquiry of the chairman of the national war labour board in regard to the matter.

COAL

INQUIRY AS TO REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Reconstruction and Supply): Mr. Speaker, several days ago the hon. member for Cape Breton South (Mr. Gillis) inquired when we might expect the report of the royal commission on coal. I have a letter dated August 3 from Judge C. C. McLaurin, one of the commissioners, who writes as follows:

Dear Mr. Howe:

I have been advised by your office that further inquiries have been made of you as to the progress being made by this commission.

A substantial portion of the report is now prepared. The work of completion is being vigorously pressed and I do not anticipate any circumstances arising which will prevent submission thereof at an early date.

ARMY SUPPLIES

PRESS REPORT AS TO DISCARDING OF SHOES AND SLIPPERS—SHIRTS, TOWELS, ETC.

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. G. DIEFENBAKER (Lake Centre): There is one other question I should like to direct to the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply, because I believe he is in charge of the department concerned. It has to do with reports in the *Montreal Star* of yesterday with regard to the dumping of shoes, which is still unexplained, and also the destruction of a quantity of khaki and blue shirts, towels, et cetera. Will the minister have an investigation made into this matter, in view of the fact that there have been so many reports of destruction of necessary goods when they are in short supply? Also will consideration be given to setting up a commission to look into the matter, particularly to report on the dumping of shoes?

Right Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Reconstruction and Supply): A most exhaustive investigation was instituted into the ques-

[Mr. MacInnis.]

tion of shoes, and it was found that the allegations that were made of destruction of usable property by War Assets Corporation are wholly without foundation. We invited the reporters to visit the plant at Valleyfield at any time they cared to do so without notice, and I understand the *Star* reporter did visit the plant with photographers yesterday. I expect that Monday's *Star* will give the results of his investigation. He was given authority to make a most complete investigation on his own. I can assure my hon. friend that since the first allegations were made, every service of the government has investigated the situation from its point of view at Valleyfield and at the point of shipment of the materials. War Assets Corporation have made a thorough investigation and I can assure my hon. friend that the allegations of destruction of valuable property are wholly without foundation.

As to the shirts, so far as we can find out that report is based entirely on gossip. We have found that no usable shirts have been sold as scrap material by War Assets Corporation.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Or destroyed?

Mr. HOWE: Or destroyed.

Mr. GRAYDON: May I ask a supplementary question? When the minister brings down his report with respect to the destruction and dumping of used materials will he answer a question which I asked, and which has been asked on several occasions, namely, who did the dumping at Point St. Charles? There has been a good deal of talk about destruction, but I should like to know who did the dumping. I understand War Assets Corporation and the Department of National Defence have the names of those who did the dumping, but they cannot be released as yet.

Mr. HOWE: I released the name to the press some weeks ago. I do not recall the name at the moment, but I shall be glad to get it. I think to table it now would be giving rather second-hand information, since it has been so widely circulated.

FLOUR

SHIPMENTS TO ECUADOR—QUESTION OF RESTRICTION OF EXPORT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. A. L. SMITH (Calgary West): Last Monday I asked a question of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who is not here this morning, with respect to the export of certain flour. He has not answered it, and I wonder if somebody would direct his attention to it so that I may have an answer.