

*Inquiries of the Ministry***AGRICULTURE**

CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR NATIONAL CONFERENCE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam):

Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him whether the government has received a brief from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, with particular reference to their request that the federal government convene a national agricultural conference. I want to ask the minister whether the government is giving favourable consideration to convening such conference with a view to focusing attention on the problems of the agricultural industry, and finding some solutions.

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Agriculture):

Mr. Speaker, the government has received the brief from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and we had a very useful and informative meeting with them this morning. All the suggestions made by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture in their brief, including that respecting a national conference on agricultural goals, will receive the very serious consideration of the government.

Mr. Douglas: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could I also ask the minister when we may expect the report of the investigation which is being carried on into the price of farm machinery. When does the minister expect to be able to make a report to the house and to table the correspondence he has had with the farm implement companies?

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker, I expect to be able to report to the house on this subject very soon.

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, I have a question which is supplementary to the first question asked by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam. Now that the minister has had ample time to study the memorandum of the Manitoba government requesting a national conference on agriculture, has he made any reply to the government of Manitoba and, if so, would he table his reply in this house?

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker, we received a communication at an earlier date. I take it that tabling my reply and the original letter would have to be subject to the usual rules with respect to correspondence passing between federal and provincial governments.

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, there is no such instruction of any kind, but I would be very pleased to have the deputy minister of national defence, to whom the information services of the defence department report, appear before the committee within the next few days to reassure my hon. friend that no such information is given out; nor would we contemplate such a thing under any circumstances.

Mr. Churchill: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister telling the house that there is no such publication as one dealing with internal information for the forces?

Mr. Hellyer: No, Mr. Speaker; there is indeed. The director of internal information reports to the director of information services who reports to the deputy minister, and as I say I should like the deputy minister to come before the committee and explain to my hon. friend why it is essential for the forces to receive accurate information and not have to rely on some of the things they read in the newspapers attributed to my hon. friend.

Mr. Churchill: A further supplementary question. Have the members of the forces not read the minister's speech of December 7 which was sent out in a red cover?

Mr. Hellyer: I certainly hope so, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

POWER

BAY OF FUNDY—REQUEST FOR PROGRESS REPORT ON STUDY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister of mines. I wonder whether the minister could tell the house what progress has been made to date by the special group set up to study Fundy tidal power; and could the minister tell us when we might expect to receive a report and some recommendations?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the engineering committee of the board met recently I think in Montreal, to interview different engineering companies and to ascertain what each of them could contribute to assist the study being undertaken of the Bay of Fundy tides. These applications are now being studied and in the coming days there will be a meeting of the full board to examine the recommendations made by the committee.