

Inquiries of the Ministry

or would not be a bona fide buying order would be determined by a court, if the matter were taken that far.

Mr. Bryce: May I take half a minute? The man I refer to is the man to whom cattle are consigned, who then buys them and sells them for his own gain.

Mr. Harkness: I can perhaps add in connection with this matter that section 29, subsection (j), of the Livestock and Livestock Products Act presumes to prohibit a commission merchant from negotiating the purchase of livestock consigned to himself without the consent of the owner of the livestock or his agent.

In actual practice it has been impossible to enforce this regulation, since it is argued from a legal standpoint that the producer, having consigned the livestock to the commission firm, has in effect appointed the commission firm as his agent and is therefore presumed to accept the selling agent's decision. As I said, it is really a legal question as to what is the situation in the case of any particular sale.

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

REPORTED OFFER TO TEACH RUSSIAN TO STAFF

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Haidasz (Trinity): I should like to ask the Minister of Trade and Commerce whether he has heard reports that members of the Russian embassy staff have been going to the national research council, distributing dictionaries of the Russian language and offering to teach our research workers and scientists the Russian language? If he has not, would he please investigate the matter?

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I thank the hon. member for directing my attention to something of which I had no knowledge.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

REPORTED DEPLETION OF FUND—INCREASE IN CONTRIBUTIONS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. C. E. Johnston (Bow River): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour. According to the latest reports the unemployment insurance fund is being depleted very quickly. Would the government make a statement to the house on the actuarial soundness of the fund, and state whether or not it is the government's intention to raise the amounts of contributions made by the different parties to the fund?

Hon. Michael Starr (Minister of Labour): I am not aware that the fund is being alarmingly depleted at all. So far as I know the

[Mr. Harkness.]

fund stands at around \$884 million. Consequently, because of the soundness of the fund, there is no intention—

Mr. Lesage: Under a Liberal administration.

Mr. Starr: —to increase contributions by those who participate in the fund.

PENSIONS

PROVINCIAL PARTICIPATION IN RECENT INCREASES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Is he now in a position to confirm the tentative answer which he gave on Saturday, as to whether all the provinces are now participating or have agreed to participate in the various pension increases passed at this session of parliament? Can he say also whether all ten provinces have agreed to pay up to the full amount of \$55 now provided in the various statutes in question?

Hon. J. W. Monteith (Minister of National Health and Welfare): I should like to thank the hon. member for giving me notice of his intention to ask this question. As to the first part, I can confirm the answer I gave to the hon. member on Saturday last to the effect that all provinces are now participating or have agreed to participate in the various pension increases passed at this session of parliament.

Since there is some interest in the second part of the question I might expand my answer a little, Mr. Speaker. New agreements effective November 1, 1957, amending the agreements previously completed have been made by the government of Canada with the following provinces: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

In a number of these provinces payments at the increased rates were made for the month of November, 1957. It is the understanding of federal authorities that the remainder either increased their payments in December, 1957, or will increase them in January, 1958. The other three provinces have indicated their intention of completing new agreements as soon as possible, and we are in the process of completing these arrangements now.

Prince Edward Island has indicated that it intends to make its agreement effective from November 1, 1957, but the provincial law will have to be amended to give effect to these agreements. Newfoundland has notified federal authorities that it will sign new agreements to be effective January 1, 1958. No