

Inquiries of the Ministry

exactly the same rate as the increase in the cost of living.

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is aware of the many improvements and progressive changes we have made to the old age pension scheme in the last few years. He is also aware that at the present time we have under review this particular scheme and all other programs in the old age security field.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, as the minister's answer confirms what I have suggested, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether this short-changing in respect of old age pensioners is a cornerstone of the just society?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE

INVITATION TO HOLD NEXT MEETINGS IN CANADA

Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington South): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether the government has extended an invitation to the secretariat of the Commonwealth association to hold the next Commonwealth meetings in Canada?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hales: Is it the intention of the government to extend an invitation?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, it is not necessary to make a decision on that question at the present time.

TRADE

TEXTILES—REQUEST FOR LIMITATION OF IMPORTS

Hon. J. W. Monteith (Perth): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Finance whether any consultations are taking place or consideration is being given to lessening the quotas of textiles allowed into Canada, particularly men's shirts from low wage countries? I ask this question because of the announcement today by Cluett Peabody and Company of Canada Limited that they are closing their plant at Stratford, which manufactures men's shirts and which will throw some 160 people out of work.

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of this development which my hon. friend mentioned, and the

difficulties that certain shirt manufacturing companies have recently had to face. Indeed it was because of the increase in low priced imports of woven shirts during 1967 and 1968 that last year we negotiated export restraint arrangements with several additional low wage countries in order to prevent further damage to Canadian shirt manufacturers. It seems reasonably certain that with the additional agreements now in effect imports of low priced shirts will decline in 1969 to levels which should provide some relief to Canadian manufacturers.

Mr. Baldwin: When you get through some of us will have no shirts.

Mr. Paul St. Pierre (Coast Chilcotin): Mr. Speaker, in respect of these agreements was Japan also included?

Mr. Benson: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we negotiated quotas with Japan. We also negotiated quotas with other countries which are considered low wage countries.

[Later:]

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): My question is directed to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker. It arises out of the question asked by the hon. member for Perth concerning the closure of a Canadian shirt factory. Does the minister now realize that as a result of his policies Canadians are rapidly losing their shirts?

HOUSING

TASK FORCE—RECOMMENDATION FOR REDUCED LEGAL FEES

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Transport in his capacity or responsibility for housing whether he is considering a recommendation to the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation that the fees charged by lawyers appointed by the corporation to handle mortgages on houses be reduced along the lines recommended by the task force.

Mr. Speaker: I believe this question was asked previously. If the hon. member thinks there is urgency in asking it a second time it might be placed on the order paper or discussed at the time of adjournment.

SPORTS

EFFECT OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS ON NATIONAL HOCKEY TEAM

Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of