

Inquiries of the Ministry

(Mr. Mayhew) has not risen in his place and said that we have the finest fisheries in British Columbia.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Cruickshank: I would like that question answered.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member has asked his question, and the minister may reply if he wishes.

Mr. Gardiner: I would just say, with regard to what has been said, that this government has not asked British Columbia to take any action whatsoever in connection with the matter. Therefore any responsibility that exists anywhere for what has been done exists with those who took the action.

Mr. Cruickshank: No, not in price fixing.

REPORTS AND PAPERS

Report of the proceedings of the commissioners of internal economy of the House of Commons for the period October 9 to December 31, 1951.—Mr. Speaker.

Report of the joint librarians of parliament.—Mr. Speaker.

Report of the chief electoral officer for the year 1951.—Mr. Speaker.

(For complete list of departmental and other reports tabled, see *Votes and Proceedings*, No. 2, of February 29, 1952.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS**AUDIBILITY OF DEBATE—SOUND-AMPLIFICATION SYSTEM**

Hon. Alphonse Fournier (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table P.C. 1084, an order in council authorizing the Minister of Public Works to enter into an agreement with Tannoy Rentals Limited, of London, England, and Cossor (Canada) Limited, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, in the terms and conditions embodied in the draft thereto attached, for supplying the installation and operation of a sound-reinforcement system in the House of Commons chamber.

PRINTING BUREAU**ACCIDENT IN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDING**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works, of which I have given notice. Is he in a position to

report to the house in regard to the collapse of part of the new printing bureau building over in Hull on Wednesday night?

Hon. Alphonse Fournier (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, in his usual courteous fashion the leader of the opposition gave me notice that he would ask me if I were in a position to make a statement on that event in my home town. I am pleased to see that he has brought the question up, which shows that he will join with me in the concern we have over the accident.

This accident resulted in the death of a respected citizen of my home town. I wish to extend to the members of the deceased's family my most sincere condolences, and I can assure them that the population of Hull joins me in expressing sympathy to those unfortunate people as well as to the other victims who were injured, some seriously and others slightly.

After the occurrence I instructed the officials of my department to investigate and to report as to the causes of the accident. This investigation has been proceeding ever since Wednesday evening. As a man was killed in the accident, according to law a coroner's inquest will be held and witnesses will be heard in the open to find the causes of the accident, the responsibility if any, and, especially, if such exists, the criminal responsibility. This inquiry will be held, I believe, within a few days.

I have instructed the officials of my department associated with this work to give all possible help to the provincial court in this inquiry. If criminal responsibility is established, the ordinary course provided by criminal law will be followed and the responsible parties indicted and tried. If there is no criminal responsibility, the question of establishing any responsibility for damage will still be under provincial jurisdiction in the civil courts.

At this stage I would hesitate to take action in connection with anything coming under provincial jurisdiction. This is the course followed where death is a result of an accident. It does not mean that the department will stop its investigation and not report to the minister as to the competence of those who are executing the contract. Any report received from my officials following that investigation will be brought before the house because I am as anxious as any hon. member to have all the facts brought out.

The leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) probably has read the press and knows that the architect who undertook the designing of this building is one of the outstanding