

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, January 31, 1951

The house met at three o'clock.

DUPLESSIS BRIDGE

INTERRUPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS BY
COLLAPSE OF BRIDGE AT THREE RIVERS

Mr. Leon Balcer (Three Rivers): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege to direct the attention of the house to a tragedy which occurred this morning at Three Rivers through the collapse of the highway bridge. Communications have been disrupted, and I should like to know if it is possible for the Department of National Defence to provide for the temporary use of a Bailey bridge to serve the area.

Hon. Brooke Claxton (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I heard only a few minutes ago of this most regrettable tragedy. There has been no inquiry from the government of the province as to what aid we could render. My recollection of this bridge is that the river is too deep and too wide to permit the use of a Bailey bridge. However, I shall be glad to look into the matter and see what can be done.

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION—CORRESPONDENCE WITH PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I should like to lay on the table copies of correspondence exchanged between the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) on my behalf and the premiers of the several provinces with respect to suggestions for constitutional amendments.

(For text of correspondence, see pages 43 to 47.)

REPORTS AND PAPERS

Hon. J. J. McCann (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the report of the Department of National Revenue for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1950; also the report of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1950.

So far as export petroleum and pulpwood regulations are concerned, none having been promulgated since the last return was made, no report will be made regarding this item.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT OF DEPARTMENT ON
"CANADA AND THE KOREAN CRISIS"

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I should like to lay on the table copies, in English and in French, of a report entitled "Documents on the Korean Crisis." This report will supplement the material contained in the report "Canada and the Korean Crisis," which I tabled on September 1, 1950.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, DEFENCE, COST OF LIVING AND
INFLATION—ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEBATE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. I wrote a letter to him which I know he has not had very much time to consider; I was informed that he was out of the office at the time of its arrival. In that letter I suggested that in view of the present situation the desirability should be considered of setting aside days for debates on the three major items that will obviously be before this house, and that the report on external affairs should be made immediately, with an opportunity to debate that as one subject, followed by national defence, and, after that, the cost of living and inflation.

Is the Prime Minister in a position to say whether he will comply with this suggestion? I believe it would provide the most orderly way of proceeding with the discussion, which may be unrelated to reality if we have no facts upon which to base our comments.

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): I received just as I was coming into the house, because up to that time I was engaged elsewhere, the letter referred to by the leader of the opposition, and I have just had time to look at it. I must confess that I was taken by surprise, because I had gathered from what took place yesterday that we would be following the traditional procedure; that after the mover and the seconder of the address had spoken today the leader of the opposition might wish to ask for an adjournment in order that he might speak to the address on Thursday