

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, March 28, 1955

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

HON. MEMBER FOR TEMISCOUATA—
BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Mr. W. G. Weir (Parliamentary Assistant to the Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, there are occasions when little courtesies, particularly to those of our members who have been here a long time, are I think appropriate. On behalf of the house I should like to extend congratulations and good wishes to the hon. member for Temiscouata and many happy returns of the day.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Jean-François Pouliot (Temiscouata): I thank the government whip for his kind wishes and my colleagues for their generous applause.

TRADE

GATT—TABLING OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I wish to lay on the tables copies in English and in French of certain instruments which were opened for signature in Geneva at the conclusion of the GATT conference. These instruments, of which we now have received copies, embody revisions which it is proposed to make in the general agreement on tariffs and trade. They also include the text of the proposed agreement on the organization for trade co-operation which would provide GATT with a permanent and definite organization, and the declaration on the continued application of schedules to the general agreement on tariffs and trade.

I am also tabling another document, the final act of the ninth session of the contracting parties to GATT. This document which has been signed merely authenticates the texts of the other four documents. Hon. members will notice that copies in the French language of the documents I am now tabling

are attached in each case to the copies in the English language and are therefore not being tabled separately.

[Later:]

SALE OF SURPLUS PRODUCTS BY UNITED STATES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Will he comment on the fact that the United States has launched the sale of a whole range of surplus agricultural products, consisting of wheat, oats, barley, flax and the like, on an open bid basis? I should like to ask the minister what effect this fire sale will have, in his estimation, on the market for Canadian farm products of a similar nature and kind, and whether it is not a fact that this action is in contravention of an agreement made by the United States government some time ago that it would not conduct a fire sale of surplus products?

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Trade and Commerce): The hon. member gave me notice of his question and I have read the press dispatch from James M. Minifie to which the question refers. I find nothing new in the dispatch. The United States has been making package offers of agricultural products to various countries in the world. They have made package offers of various commodities to the United Kingdom and to Germany. We have been happy to find that the countries receiving these offers are not inclined to upset their usual pattern of trade. We also know that the United States has called for bulk tenders on butter. The Canadian government enters a protest whenever it feels it is justified in doing so. It is difficult to protest a series of offers, but this government endeavours to look after the interests of Canada as well as possible. I think it is encouraging to find that, in spite of the offers of wheat made by the United States, Canada is selling more wheat than the United States has succeeded in disposing of by the various methods it has adopted.

[Later:]

Mr. H. R. Argue (Assiniboia): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce arising out of his