

Questions

the subject of attention at the International Labour Conference. The obligations assumed by Canada in connection with these matters under the Treaty of Versailles were considered at the conference, and a resolution was adopted expressing the view that the authorities deemed to be respectively competent to deal with the matters in question should give careful and sympathetic attention to the proposals emanating from the international labour body with a view to enacting necessary legislation where this may be found practicable. The resolution also provided that the federal government, on request from a majority of the provincial governments, would summon a special conference for the consideration of International Labour Conference matters when this may be deemed necessary. In conformity with this last-mentioned resolution a letter was addressed by the Prime Minister of Canada to the several provincial premiers on December 22, last, proposing that a federal-provincial conference should assemble in Ottawa in the near future to deal with matters arising out of the relations between the Dominion of Canada and the international labour body and inquiring if the provincial governments desired that a conference for this purpose should be held.

2. The replies of five provinces were favourable to the proposed conference, those of two other provinces were not unfavourable but intimated that these provinces had limited interest in the subject matter. In one case the reply was indefinite, and in another case the reply of the provincial government has not yet come to hand.

3. The suggestion was made in the letter of the federal Prime Minister that the conference should be held in the end of February or early in March. The replies indicated that a meeting in Ottawa at this time would be inconvenient for several of the provincial governments on account of their respective legislatures being in session. After consideration of the replies received, it was decided by the Dominion government that it would be in accord with the desire of most of the provinces that the conference should be held, but that the question of the date should be taken up with the provinces in the spring looking to a meeting in the early part of next summer.

TORONTO SUBURBAN RAILWAY

Mr. CHURCH:

1. What legal agreements and options have been made by the Government of Canada from time to time to date for the sale in whole or part of the Toronto Suburban Railway between Guelph and Toronto to the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario, and why were these agreements for the whole road not carried

[Mr. Murdock.]

out and acted on in view of this road being an inactive asset of the Canadian National?

2. Is it the intention of the Government to enable the city of Toronto to acquire the part in the city limits in accordance with an agreement made between the city and the Toronto Suburban Company validated by the Ontario legislature many years ago by which the city at the expiration of the company's franchise which expired over a year ago, could acquire this road within the city limits by arbitration?

3. Was any agreement prepared for sale of the part within the city limits and on what terms, and is the announcement correct of Mr. Gerald Ruel, Vice-President of the National Railways in a letter to the Board of Control of Toronto in January last that such an agreement existed for sale of part? If so, with whom was it made?

4. Under what terms and conditions of purchase of this road by the Government a few years ago; and its absorption by the National Railways System, can the government sell part and not all of this railway without the consent of the bond holders?

5. Why was the agreement and options legally given for the sale of the whole road to the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario not carried out, and has the policy of the old Board of Directors of the National Railways to dispose of this whole road which never paid, been abandoned by the present directors, in view of a favourable vote of the ratepayers of Toronto to sanction such purchase agreement for the whole road?

Hon. Mr. GRAHAM:

1. No legal agreement or option was given.

2. The question is not one for the government, but for the management of the Toronto Suburban Railway.

3. No agreement has been prepared for the sale of the lines within the city. The agreement which Mr. Ruel referred to was an operating agreement.

4. The government has not purchased this road. The stock merely was acquired by the Canadian Northern Realities Limited. The question of sale is one for the management of the railways.

5. See answer to No. 1.

GERMAN REPARATIONS

On the motion of Mr. J. S. Woodsworth (Centre Winnipeg.)

That, in the opinion of this House, it is in the interest of world peace that Canada should withdraw all claims on Germany for reparations.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I am ready to go on with this motion, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. GRAHAM: This is an important question in which the whole House will be interested. There can, of course, be no objection to my hon. friend going on with it this evening if he so desires, but I would suggest that we adjourn the debate after he has concluded so that we may have a fuller House to discuss the subject on another occasion.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I should like, of course, to have as full a house as possible when the motion is brought up, because it