

Inquiries of the Ministry

by the C.B.C. to carry out this extension of service, which is greatly needed in the north?

Mr. Lamontagne: The Government is of the view that we should wait for the recommendations of the Fowler Committee. Since this is the most serious investigation which has ever been made into broadcasting in Canada, I do not believe a study of a year and a half is too long.

Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur): I should like to ask the Secretary of State if he would consider approaching the Board of Broadcast Governors and asking them to suspend any awards or grants of licences for the extension of service until we have the Fowler Commission report.

Mr. Lamontagne: Well, Mr. Speaker, I should like to check on this, but my view is that the freeze on the extension of alternative service is still on.

Mr. Fisher: May I ask a supplementary question. I would refer the Minister to the hearings that are being held next week at which both the C.B.C. and a number of private stations have applications for extension of service. In view of the fact that the Minister does not seem to be informed of this, I wonder if he could look into the matter a little more thoroughly.

Mr. Lamontagne: I will.

Mr. Simpson: I wonder if the Secretary of State could inform the House how the Government can justify waiting until the Fowler Committee makes this report before approving any further extensions of service, when they allow the capital expenditures of the C.B.C. to carry on into the hundreds of millions of dollars when for a few million dollars they could extend services. How can this be justified?

Mr. Lamontagne: I should like to tell my hon. friend that the extension of service has not been stopped, and there are several millions included in the C.B.C. estimates for this year for that purpose.

[*Later:*]

[*Translation*]

Mr. L. J. Pigeon (Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Secretary of State.

Should the Fowler Commission recommend in its report the extension of the C.B.C.'s French network wherever there is a French speaking minority, can the Secretary of State assure the house that the Government will

ask the C.B.C. to give effect to such a recommendation?

Mr. Lamontagne: Mr. Speaker, the party to which I belong has already taken a very definite position on that matter.

[*English*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

CONSIDERATION OF STAFF BOARD REPORT
ON STAFF

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Lloyd Francis (Carleton): I should like to ask the President of the Privy Council if he has any further information on the subject of increases for certain members of the staff of the House.

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, as indicated yesterday this matter has been considered and a decision taken. As I understand the practice, it is that the report is printed in *Votes and Proceedings*. This will be done in due course.

TRANSPORT

MARITIME PROVINCES—REQUEST FOR FREEZE
ON FREIGHT RATES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Albert): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transport, since this might be my last opportunity to do so before a time limit on questions is imposed next week. Might I ask the Minister if he has seen a resolution passed by the Maritime Provinces Board of Trade in Saint John this week which urges a freeze on all rail freight rates in the Maritimes pending the study the Minister announced at the beginning of the week. If so, does this commend itself to the Minister?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): I thought from the preamble to the hon. gentleman's question that he was about to go to another place. I am relieved to discover that he is going to stay here to enjoy the new regime.

In reply to the question, I may say I have no doubt that a communication is on its way to me from the Maritime Provinces Board of Trade. I did note the press report to which the hon. gentleman referred. I have had similar representations from other bodies in the Atlantic Provinces and the matter, of course, will receive the most careful consideration.