

and Welfare. It would be a question for joint consideration by the government, and the answer will have to be given at a later day.

Mrs. STRUM: I should like to follow it up with this question: Would the minister consider the setting up of a joint committee of both houses of parliament to consider our moral obligation to alleviate the plight of those children and find ways and means of placing as many as possible in homes in Canada?

Mr. SPEAKER: I would ask the hon. member to be kind enough to put the question on the order paper.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): May I say just a word to the hon. member who has spoken?—because, like her, I have been deeply impressed by the conditions in Europe, particularly in Germany, where I think a large part of the population will almost certainly face starvation and very large numbers will die in the course of the coming winter owing to the fact that in many cases they are without food, clothing and shelter. Transportation facilities are bad, and fuel is scarce. It would be impossible to exaggerate what central Europe is facing in regard to the coming winter. Whether that problem can be met in the manner in which the hon. member has suggested is something that will have to be considered very carefully.

I have spoken about the question of transportation being one of great concern. In that connection I was speaking of transportation within Europe itself. But for us an even greater problem arising out of inadequate transportation is one which concerns Canadian men and women who are at this time in Britain and in Europe, namely, the repatriation of those who have been serving overseas in the years of war, some of them for six, a great many of them for several years. It is only fair to say at once that until adequate means are found of bringing back to this continent the men who have been seeking to preserve freedom and to destroy the enemy, it would not be possible to consider asking transportation companies to give the space which would be required for them for any other purpose, however necessary and humane it may be to bring additional people, men, women or children, from Europe to Canada or the United States at this time.

I would join with my colleague in saying that the question is one which would have to be considered very carefully by the ministry before any definite answer could be given. I think it is well at once to make perfectly clear that the great problem to-day is that

of transportation and repatriation of the men who have been fighting at the front, and their wives and children.

## HEALTH INSURANCE

### CONSIDERATION OF COMPULSORY SYSTEM AT CONFERENCE WITH PROVINCES

On the orders of the day:

Hon. H. A. BRUCE (Parkdale): May I direct a question to the Prime Minister? The press reports that President Truman has proposed to congress the introduction of a compulsory health insurance system. Could the Prime Minister say whether this important subject is on the agenda for early consideration when the dominion-provincial conference meets next week?

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Yes, it is on the agenda. I might give my hon. friend, as he sent me notice of his question, a fuller answer, to this effect: As he knows, the dominion government included in its proposals placed before the dominion-provincial conference on reconstruction on August 6 of this year a proposal for a nation-wide system of health insurance. That proposal was among those receiving consideration from the provinces, and when the coordinating committee of the conference reconvenes next week, the subject of health insurance, like the other dominion proposals, will be before the premiers for consideration.

## FUEL

### INQUIRY AS TO REPORT OF COMMISSION ON SOURCES AND REQUIREMENTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. P. C. BLACK (Cumberland): I should like to know from the Minister of Mines and Resources when we may expect the report of the commission dealing with the sources and requirements of fuel in Canada.

Hon. J. A. GLEN (Minister of Mines and Resources): The report has not yet come to hand. I will make inquiries as to when I may expect to receive it.

Mr. NORMAN J. M. LOCKHART (Lincoln): This is in the nature of an advance request to the Minister of Munitions and Supply. May I suggest that a statement be given to the Canadian public at an early day indicating exactly what the fuel situation is, as this ambiguous amount of seventy-five per cent which has been suggested is causing much consternation.

Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Munitions and Supply): I shall be glad to give a reply on the civil estimates.