

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Walter L. Gordon (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the government has been giving consideration to the tariff schedules not only in this area but all across the board in connection with the Kennedy round, and more particularly in connection with the next budget. Apart from that I do not think I can answer this question in specific terms.

FORT CHURCHILL, MAN.—GRANTS IN LIEU OF
TAXES ON HARBOURS BOARD
ESTABLISHMENTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill): My question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Is the minister in a position to say whether negotiations are under way between officials of the federal government and the province of Manitoba concerning grants in lieu of taxes in relation to national harbours board establishments in Fort Churchill?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): The question of grants in lieu of taxes or of taxation under the ordinary provisions applying to government departments is under very active review at the present time. Indeed, one increase was made in these payments quite recently. The matter is being worked out with a view, ultimately, to putting the harbours board on the same basis as government departments.

IMMIGRATION

UNITED NATIONS REQUEST RESPECTING
WHITE RUSSIAN REFUGEES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Nicholas Mandziuk (Marquette): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and ask whether his department or the Canadian government received a request from the United Nations high commissioner for refugees to accept 200 white Russian refugees from China now stranded in Hong Kong.

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): I shall have to take the question as notice, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Mandziuk: The press has it that Canada has refused to accept them. If so, I hope the minister will give us an explanation.

COAL

ALBERTA—REPRESENTATIONS RESPECTING
FREIGHT RATE INCREASE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to

the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys, and maybe it might also be answered by the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Have the government, or the ministers in question, received a brief from the coal operators of Alberta and the united mine workers of Alberta, 1,200 of them, in reference to the increased freight rate on coal from Alberta and B.C. to the port of Vancouver, from \$5.13 a ton to \$7.45 a ton, which will affect our Japanese market so far as anthracite coal is concerned and our domestic market so far as subbituminous coal is concerned?

Hon. W. M. Benidickson (Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys): Mr. Speaker, the answer to my hon. friend's question is yes; I received a delegation from the western coal operators, and the matter is being given consideration.

Mr. Woolliams: A supplementary question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Has the hon. gentleman's department received any notification from the Japanese purchasers of hard coal from the Crowsnest Pass and Canmore areas of Alberta and British Columbia with reference to cancellation of their contracts in view of the fact that there will be an increase in the tonnage cost to the Japanese?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Not to my knowledge, but I will be glad to inquire.

[Later:]

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, I should like to follow up the question I asked the Minister of Trade and Commerce, the minister of mines and the Minister of Transport. Has the minister received any brief with reference to the increase in freight rates under the new railway legislation, which would increase freight rates on coal from British Columbia and Alberta to the port of Vancouver to be shipped to the Japanese by \$2 to \$3 per ton?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say that not only have I received representations on the matter, but I understand that the freight rate increase is not to be proceeded with at the present time.

Mr. Woolliams: Is that government policy, or the railway's policy, that the freight rate increase will not be proceeded with under the proposed bill which is before the house?

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, I am just giving some information which was passed