

Inquiries of the Ministry

there are others of direct concern to the government. As soon as we can reconcile all the interests I will be able to make a statement.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Would the minister give an assurance to the people of Winnipeg, as well as to the employees in question, that the pledge given by Right Hon. Lester Pearson, then prime minister of Canada, is going to be carried out?

Mr. Hellyer: Yes, Mr. Speaker. That commitment which was given by the former prime minister, and which was subsequently reiterated by me in Winnipeg, still stands.

[Translation]

Mr. Dumont: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Transport.

Could he tell us when the president of Air Canada will be appointed?

[English]

Mr. Hellyer: Not precisely, Mr. Speaker.

FREIGHT RATES**STUDY OF LESS THAN CARLOAD RATES IN ATLANTIC PROVINCES**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. I gave him notice of it yesterday. Can the hon. gentleman advise as to the progress in the studies of the Canadian Transportation Commission dealing with less than carload rates for Atlantic Canada, and when we may expect action on such studies in parliament?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport): We have been doing some internal studies on this question, Mr. Speaker, but in addition, as my hon. friend will recall, last year I asked the Atlantic premiers to put their heads together and come up with some recommendations which they felt would be useful to the Atlantic region. The reason I suggested this is that the criticism is often made that Ottawa is remote from the problems of the area, and the people living there are more intimately aware of the problems and as a result might suggest more effective solutions.

Up to this point I have not received any report from the Atlantic premiers. I hope this will be forthcoming soon, so that whatever input they have can be considered with our own studies in the very real hope that we can

[Mr. Hellyer.]

get some policy which will be both reasonably economical in broad terms and more effective to maritime transportation.

Mr. McCleave: As a supplementary question, do I understand from the minister's answer that the Canadian Transportation Commission has completed its side of the studies?

Mr. Hellyer: I did not say completed, Mr. Speaker, but I understand that an internal paper has been forwarded for consideration by our department. Just how extensive it is I cannot say, because I have not yet seen it.

Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland-Colchester North): As a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, could the minister indicate whether it is the intention of the government to continue the rate freeze until such time as a transportation policy is produced for the Atlantic provinces?

Mr. Hellyer: I do not think this would be a good morning for speculation on that point, Mr. Speaker. I would really prefer to give the government a chance to look at the over-all problem and decide what is the best solution compared with some others that might be offered.

Mr. Coates: Would the minister not agree that while a transportation policy is being considered it would be unfair for that area—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member's supplementary question is argumentative.

HOUSING**TORONTO—RECOMMENDATIONS OF WELFARE COUNCIL CONFERENCE**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Transport, who is in charge of housing. Has the minister received the report and recommendations of the housing conference held recently in Toronto, sponsored by the Canadian Welfare Council? If so, what steps is the government going to take to implement those recommendations in order to solve the serious housing crisis?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I cannot say whether all the recommendations have been received, but I know if they have not they will be. A member of the federal task force, Dr. James Gillies of Toronto, was in attendance at most of the conference meetings and is to make a