

Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

TRANSPORT**FREIGHT RATE LEVEL IN PRAIRIE PROVINCES—ACTION TO REMOVE DISCRIMINATION**

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport. In view of the very high freight rates prevailing in the Prairie provinces and particularly in northern Alberta where the freight rate structure is now at the peak for North America, what plans, if any, has the government in mind to rectify this discriminatory situation?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I do not think I could answer that question without more definitive information.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I had some doubt as to the question. Perhaps the hon. member might make it more specific. It seems to me he is inviting the minister to make a statement of a very general nature. If he could make the question more specific it might be easier for the Chair to allow it.

Mr. Southam: Then, Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister if he would consult with his colleague the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs with a view to looking into what appears to be discriminatory rates in a captive freight rate area since this is a matter of deep concern to the people of western Canada?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, I would go further than that. I might advise the hon. member and the House that I have initiated talks with the officials and the premiers of the prairie provinces with a view to obtaining their general reaction to the current freight rate situation and to see what recommendations they might have for improvement.

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NATIONAL SECURITY**REPORTED REDUCTION OF RCMP PERSONNEL ENGAGED IN SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPERS AND MURDERERS**

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I would like the permission of the House to supplement a reply I made earlier to a question asked by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands concerning the number of RCMP in the Montreal area working on the current case. There has been no reduction of manpower working on this matter by the RCMP.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order affecting the business of the House for tomorrow. It is the intention of the government, if the item of business now to be

[Mr. Speaker.]

called is not completed today, to continue with it tomorrow. Therefore we will not call an opposition day tomorrow.

Mr. Baldwin: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister whether he has given any thought, if the consideration of the bill which we are to consider today and possibly tomorrow should not be completed, to whether or not the government is prepared to sit throughout tomorrow until the business is concluded?

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, we would be happy to consider that.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**PUBLIC ORDER (TEMPORARY MEASURES) ACT, 1970****PROVISION OF EMERGENCY POWERS FOR PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ORDER**

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice) moved that Bill C-181, to provide temporary emergency powers for the preservation of public order in Canada, be read the second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole.

● (3:00 p.m.)

He said: Mr. Speaker, we are beginning the debate this afternoon upon a bill which fulfills the commitment given by this government and made before the final vote was taken upon the resolution of this House which endorsed the proclamation by the government of the War Measures Act. The commitment given by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen), the government House Leader, was that within a month of that date, October 19, we would bring in the bill. We have brought in the bill within two weeks of that time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): This bill is designed to replace the regulations made pursuant to the War Measures Act on October 16. It is directed toward meeting the continuing threat of the Front de Libération du Québec in Quebec and to the relationship of Quebec within Canada. It is a temporary measure designed to meet what we hope will be a temporary phenomenon. The measure before the House is precise in its terms. If adopted by Parliament, it will revoke the proclamation which activated the power of the War Measures Act, a power that, I hasten to add, was not totally exercised under that act but was exercised only in a limited way.

The burden of what I have to say today will relate to the reasons for this bill and the threat that the bill is intended to meet. The purpose of the bill is to replace the regulations passed under the War Measures Act. During the two-day debate on October 16 and 17, the House of Commons debated whether or not the government had reason to invoke that act. This House has already, by an overwhelming vote, endorsed the proclamation of that act.