

*Freight Rates Equalization*

## INQUIRY FOR RETURN

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. M. E. MAYBEE (Northumberland, Ont.): On March 22 an order for return was passed with reference to the dismissal of one John Hanna. I would like to ask the Minister of Railways (Mr. Dunning) why that has not been brought down.

Hon. C. A. DUNNING (Minister of Railways): I will see why the return has not been brought down.

## EQUALIZATION OF FREIGHT RATES

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. L. J. LADNER (Vancouver South): I observe the presence of an old friend, Mr. John Oliver, Premier of British Columbia, and as the Prime Minister and the Minister of Railways are in their seats, I would like to ask the government one or two questions. Has any application or representation been received by the government from Mr. John Oliver, Premier of British Columbia, relating to the reduction or equalization of freight rates by this parliament? If so, is the government considering action on the question of freight rates, by act of parliament or otherwise?

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Perhaps my hon. friend will let me answer that question to-morrow. At the moment I cannot speak for all the members of the government, and I would like to make sure first whether representations have been received in any quarter.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Perhaps the Minister of Railways could answer the question now.

Mr. DUNNING: The answer of the Prime Minister is quite satisfactory.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I do not believe the matter is one of urgent public importance, and I think an answer to-morrow will serve.

Mr. LADNER: We in British Columbia believe it to be a matter of great importance. May I ask the Prime Minister, in making the announcement to-morrow, to also refer to the question of the application for the return of the Peace River block and the Dominion railway belt.

Mr. MACDONALD (Antigonish): Put the question on the order paper.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I think if my hon. friend would put his question on the [Mr. Cardin.]

order paper it could be answered more satisfactorily. I will try to give him a prompt reply if the question is placed on the order paper.

## PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE BUDGET

On the Orders of the Day:

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN (Leader of the Opposition): On several occasions I, or others on this side of the House, have asked the government through the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) whether any changes were proposed to be made as to the budget. At first we received negative replies, but on the last two occasions the replies were certainly not negative, whatever else they were. I am receiving reports of a character which I cannot ignore to the effect that very extensive changes are proposed. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if he proposes during this debate—and if so at what early date—to advise the House of the changes thus proposed, or is he prepared to let the debate become purely academic?

Hon. J. A. ROBB (Minister of Finance): My observation, Mr. Speaker, is that the debate has been academic for some days, and I am very anxious that we should reach a division. The last time my right hon. friend asked this question he said he was anxious to make a speech but did not like to do so if there were to be any changes made, and I said he would be quite safe in making his speech. I have no other reply to-day.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I would like an answer to my question. I ask the Minister of Finance again, as plainly as I can put it, if he proposes budget changes, whether of importance or not, and if so, whether he proposes to let the House know about them whilst the debate is proceeding.

Mr. ROBB: I have no reply to give to my right hon. friend other than what I have already said. He knows that in committee representations are frequently made and considered. If my right hon. friend has any suggestions to make when we get into committee I will be very glad to listen to them.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I must ask the government to answer yes or no. There is no reason why that question cannot be answered. Does the government propose, whether in committee or before, substantial changes in the budget presentation?

Mr. ROBB: My answer to that question is no.

Mr. MEIGHEN: No substantial change?