

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Jean-Eudes Dubé (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to the right hon. member for Prince Albert for his kind remarks. Of course I will do my utmost to be worthy of the confidence which has been vested in me, and will work for the welfare of veterans in Canada in a just society.

In reply to his question may I say it is our intention to have the Woods committee report referred to the House of Commons committee on veterans affairs as quickly as possible, and to act on the recommendations of that committee as soon as we receive them.

Mr. H. Russell MacEwan (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I wish to ask the minister whether he or the government is taking action at this time to provide further funds for veterans under the Veterans Land Act.

Mr. Dubé: Mr. Speaker, the amount made available under the V.L.A. was \$74 million, which is 25 per cent more than the average for the past five years. This amount is being taken up very quickly, but we must remember that the veterans will have until 1974 to avail themselves of this fund.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. When the report of the Woods committee is referred to the veterans affairs committee, will that committee also be given authority to consider the position of those living on the war veterans allowance?

Mr. Dubé: Of course it is up to the house to specify the exact terms of reference which will be made to the committee.

TRADE**PROHIBITION ON SALE OF CANADIAN TURBOT IN U.S.**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. James McGrath (St. John's East): I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Has the minister made any recommendations to Washington regarding the recent decision of the U.S. government to prohibit the sale of Canadian turbot on the U.S. market under the brand name of Greenland halibut? This represents about \$11 million a year to the Canadian fisheries.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): I can assure the hon. member that this matter has been very much

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

engaging the attention of the Department of External Affairs, which has been working on behalf of Canadian producers.

HARBOURS**ROBERTS BANK, B.C.—PROPOSED LOCATION OF RAILWAY LINE**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport. Can he say whether representations have been received from municipalities and other groups in British Columbia protesting the proposed route of the Roberts Bank railroad? If so, what consideration has been given to this matter?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport): Representations have been received from a number of groups and from a number of British Columbia members of parliament, one of whom was the hon. member for New Westminster. The siting of the proposed railway line is a provincial responsibility in so far as it is a provincial railway being built within a province, and therefore the choice of the site and the responsibility for it comes under the jurisdiction of the provincial government. At the same time I do not think anyone could disclaim interest in this problem, which is of considerable importance to the people in the lower mainland and indeed to all Canadians. I can tell my hon. friend that as late as yesterday, I believe, the two major railways involved have again been in consultation with the local municipalities concerned, and discussions are continuing. I understand also there is now a liaison with the regional planning board for the lower mainland.

HOUSING**INQUIRY AS TO INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to direct to the Minister of Transport in his capacity as minister in charge of housing. In view of the absence of any specific reference to housing in the Speech from the Throne, is he preparing any legislation to put before this session of parliament to deal with the growing housing crisis and the very serious, galloping increases in rents in Canada?