

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** There are exchanges proceeding in reference to the present negotiations at GATT. The negotiations which have proceeded at Geneva up to this time have concerned proposals to rebind existing tariff concessions. The timetable contemplates that commencing March 1 negotiations will be undertaken with respect to proposed new exchanges, and of course there have been communications passing between the government of Canada and the government of the United Kingdom in reference to this subject in so far as it relates to trade between the two countries.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Could I ask the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, whether the Canadian government has made any proposals to the United Kingdom government?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Speaker, we have expressed views with regard to proposals to the United Kingdom and they have expressed certain views to us. This is the ordinary form of exchange between the two governments.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I think the minister misunderstood my question, Mr. Speaker. My question was specifically with relation to the further liberalization of trade between the two countries.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** We have made certain proposals to Her Majesty's government in the United Kingdom and Her Majesty's government in the United Kingdom has made certain proposals to the Canadian government.

**LABOUR CONDITIONS****THREATENED RAIL STRIKE—INQUIRY AS TO ARBITRATION PROCEDURE**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Has the Prime Minister received a letter from Frank Hall advising him that negotiations are being cut off with the railways partly, at any rate, because of reports that the government is considering some form of arbitration procedure? In view of the desirability of continuing negotiations, could the Prime Minister inform the house whether or not the government is considering a form of arbitration in this dispute?

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I have not as yet received any letter from Mr. Hall. After I have received it, I shall then be in a position to reply to whatever allegations or statements may be made therein.

**Mr. Argue:** Mr. Speaker, may I ask the direct question I asked a couple of weeks ago when the Prime Minister did not answer. Is the government in fact giving consideration to arbitration proceedings?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I think the hon. member is asking the government to declare a fairly considerable amount of policy in answer to a question from him, and that is not in accordance with the practice.

**Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the Prime Minister, I believe, has already tabled the letter which he wrote to Mr. Hall and others, I wonder if he would not do the same thing in connection with Mr. Hall's letter when he receives it?

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, when the letter is received consideration will be given to the request of the hon. gentleman.

**DEFENCE PRODUCTION****BOBCAT VEHICLES—REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER MEET LAKEHEAD DELEGATION**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Hubert Badanai (Fort William):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Prime Minister arising out of a statement made in the house on Wednesday by the Prime Minister in connection with the award of a contract for 20 Bobcats to the Canadian Car Company. Will the Prime Minister indicate if he will meet a delegation from the city councils and other bodies of the two cities at a time suitable to him during his visit to the lakehead tomorrow?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I think the hon. member is asking a hypothetical question. He has not indicated that there has been any request for such a meeting.

[Later:]

**Mr. Badanai:** Mr. Speaker, may I direct another question to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the hon. gentleman is going to be in the lakehead tomorrow, will he accept an invitation to meet a delegation from the cities of Port Arthur and Fort William?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The hon. member is repeating a question which I have already indicated is purely hypothetical, in the sense that there is no suggestion that there has been any request for the Prime Minister to meet these gentlemen.

**INQUIRY AS TO SALE OF AIR CARGO PLANES TO U.S.**

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the