

to make it possible for Canada to require similar action.

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the action to which the hon. member refers is action being taken in the United States pursuant to section 4 of the United States Clayton Act. We have no counterpart of such a law in our own Combines Investigation Act and no such action would be possible in Canada. As the hon. member knows, the question of combines, monopolies and competition policy generally is before the Economic Council of Canada for advice. When we receive a report from the council we will study it and bring in a revised combines act to the house.

Mr. Baldwin: Then you will have a white paper going back again to the Economic Council.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Has the minister been in touch with the officials in the United States who are dealing with this matter, to see whether they have any information to help us ascertain whether the same overcharging is taking place in Canada.

Mr. Basford: As my predecessor explained in January 1968, the Director of Investigation and Research under the Combines Investigation Act had been in touch at that time with the officials of the anti-trust section of the United States department of justice, who advised him at that time there was no evidence in the United States which indicated there had been offences committed in Canada under our law.

TRANSPORT

REPRESENTATIVE OF TRANSPORT COMMISSION AT MARITIMES COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Mr. Louis-Roland Comeau (South Western Nova): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport, or in his absence the acting minister. In light of the fact that the Canadian Transport Commission has not sent a representative to attend the hearings of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, which committee is beginning a tour of Atlantic Canada in Fredericton today, and in light of the fact that the chairman has requested that a representative be sent, can the minister assure the house that the Canadian Transport Commission will be represented at the remaining hearings to be held in the maritimes?

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NIAMEY—CONFRONTATION BETWEEN DELEGATIONS

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs regarding the French-speaking countries conference in Niamey. There have been reports of a confrontation between members of the federal and provincial delegations and I would like to ask the minister whether a previous understanding could have prevented that situation and whether any thought was effectively given to that?

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Before the delegation went to Niamey there were conversations between the governments of Quebec and of Canada and also with other provinces, and an agreement was reached concerning the composition of the Canadian delegation. I believe these arrangements are in the best interests of all concerned. I hope they will be carried through in an amicable fashion and be worthy of our country.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question.

I thank the minister for his answer. Now could he tell us whether he considers the federal delegation as the head delegation, or—

Mr. Speaker: I do not think the question is acceptable as put. The hon. member is asking the minister for an opinion and in this sense I do not think his question is in order.

[English]

TRANSPORT

DELAY IN MOVEMENT OF CANADIAN NATIONAL BOX CARS

Mr. Paul St. Pierre (Coast Chilcotin): Mr. Speaker, this question is for the Minister of Transport or in his absence the minister representing him today. It is in relation to rail movement to the west coast of lumber, pulp and products other than wheat. Can the minister advise the house what action is being taken to expedite the movement of several hundred C.N.R. box cars which reportedly are sidetracked on the Jasper-Prince Rupert line, thereby causing a delay which is