

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, serious consideration is being given to the congestion problems that may arise and at times interfere with the right of the farmer to deliver to the elevator of his choice. There does seem to be general support for the Bracken formula and the 12-month period. However, some other aspects having to do with the congestion problem might well be added to it.

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): In light of the fact that there is general support for the Bracken formula in normal circumstances and the fact that these are unusual circumstances and also because of the great concern of many farmers to the point where they are cancelling curling games to attend meetings regarding this matter, may I ask the minister whether he would not at this juncture consider the possibility of allowing the free movement of boxcars which would normally have gone to the Federal Grain elevator system so that the farmers would in fact have the right to choose the elevator to which they wish to deliver?

Mr. Lang: As I indicated, I believe there is general support for the Bracken formula, and by that I mean support from all parties concerned. However, there is a view which some hold, as I have just mentioned, of the need for a new method of dealing with the congestion problem. If this can be dealt with it will mean that the farmers themselves will in effect be making the decision on where they deliver their grain and therefore where boxcar allocations go. I hope this can be done at an early date. If the curling games can be taken up again, I would be very glad to attend.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**INQUIRY WHETHER CANADIAN SOLDIERS ARE SERVING WITH BRITISH FORCES IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

Mr. Lee Grills (Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It deals with a report I received about a Canadian soldier who is on duty in Belfast, Ireland, and whose mailing address is Camp Gagetown, New Brunswick. Can the minister say whether or not there are Canadian soldiers serving with the British forces in Belfast?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): It is my understanding that no members of the Canadian Armed Forces are serving with the British forces in Northern Ireland. There may be Canadians who have joined the British armed forces and are now serving in Northern Ireland, but in these circumstances the Canadian government is not involved. The standing instructions are that if any Canadian soldiers are attached to British units they are not to serve in such places. If there has been some transgression of this rule we will look into it, but so far as we know this is not so.

Mr. Grills: I should like to ask the minister whether or not there are any Canadian soldiers serving in any capacity in Belfast, apart from the British military efforts there?

[Mr. Downey.]

Mr. Sharp: So far as I know there are no members of the Canadian Armed Forces who are serving in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Baldwin: They may be refugees from the tax reform bill.

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FISHERIES**RESPONSE TO PETITION SEEKING REPRESENTATIONS TO UNITED STATES TO PERMIT IMPORTATION OF CANADIAN SWORDFISH**

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment but in his absence I shall direct it to the Acting Prime Minister who has a stake in this as Secretary of State for External Affairs. Since the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment have just been sent a petition asking the government of Canada to urge the United States government to permit importation of Canadian swordfish, can we be advised of the response to this plea?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it has been received and it is under consideration.

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TRANSPORT**INQUIRY AS TO REPORT ON RAILWAY SAFETY—SPECIFIC INVESTIGATIONS OF RECENT DERAILMENTS**

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Transport. When may we expect the report on rail safety as a result of the investigation undertaken by the Railway Transport Committee some months ago?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am informed by the Canadian Transport Commission, in response to an inquiry I made which was prompted by the hon. member's question, I believe, a few days ago, that the report is in the process of being completed or written and should be available within two or three weeks.

Mr. Gleave: May I ask the minister whether specific studies or investigations are being undertaken into the most recent causes of derailments in the east and also on many branch lines in western Canada since these affect the safety of the men who operate the trains?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, I cannot say with certainty that investigations into the various accidents to which the hon. member refers have actually started. It is mandatory, however, that an investigation of each rail accident be undertaken as quickly as possible after its occurrence, so undoubtedly all of them will be covered in this way.