

Inquiries of the Ministry

plan for the resumption of the formal federal-provincial conference?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, it would be impossible to answer that question. When we are in a position to advise the house with respect to that matter hon. members will immediately be made aware of the date fixed.

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): May I ask the Prime Minister a supplementary question. At this informal conference will the federal government be presenting any briefs or any research material having to do with this general problem? I am asking this question on the basis that this would be material different from concrete proposals but nevertheless, I am sure, would be helpful at such a conference.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am sure the hon. member must have misunderstood the request made on the part of the municipalities association. The request which was accepted by myself in February was that the municipalities should have the opportunity of presenting their ideas and their conceptions of the problems and, having received the benefit of their advice, whatever steps should be taken thereafter would be for future consideration.

FINANCE**INQUIRY AS TO INCREASE IN INTEREST CHARGES ON CONVERSION LOAN**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. R. Garland (Nipissing): May I direct a question to the Minister of Finance, of which I was unable to give him satisfactory notice. Would the minister advise the house of the approximate increase in interest charges to the taxpayers which is likely to result from the reconversion of victory loan bonds?

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): That would depend entirely on how many of the present outstanding victory loan bonds are turned in for new bonds of the conversion loan, and also which of the four maturities of the Canada conversion loan of 1958 are selected. I am afraid it is not possible, therefore, to give my hon. friend anything more definite than that.

Mr. Garland: Would it not be fair to assume that the government, before making a move of this kind, would have estimated what it was expected to cost the Canadian taxpayers? Surely in a project of that size—

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Of course we could figure out, as could my hon. friend, what the increase will be in any particular maturity which is chosen among the four new ones, but we do not know what is going

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

to be the proportion of conversion applied to each of the four maturities that are offered.

Mr. Garland: Am I correct in assuming that there was no estimate made of what this would cost the Canadian people?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): My hon. friend is not correct in his assumption, Mr. Speaker.

HIGHWAYS**NEW BRUNSWICK—REQUEST FOR INCLUSION OF CERTAIN ROADS IN ACCESS PROGRAM**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. J. Robichaud (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources. Could the minister advise the house if, in the allocation of \$11,700,000 to New Brunswick for its roads to resources program, consideration has been given by the federal government and the government of the province of New Brunswick to the construction of a highway to provide a direct road link between Saint John and Fundy national park, and also for the long advocated Plaster Rock link-up across the central stretch of New Brunswick to connect the north shore and the potato growing Saint John river valley by direct highway route?

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources): Mr. Speaker, I will follow the practice I have laid down in the house with respect to these matters. I shall look into the question, ascertaining the location of the roads; and if any of the roads mentioned by the hon. member have been agreed upon by the two governments I shall give a yes or no answer.

PRAIRIE FARM ASSISTANCE**COMMENT ON STATEMENT BY PREMIER OF MANITOBA**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the hon. member for Drummond-Arthabaska asked this question, as reported at page 2289 of *Hansard*:

I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture or in his absence to the acting minister. Has he any announcement to make to the house in view of the statement attributed to the premier of Manitoba in a report appearing in the *Montreal Gazette* of July 11, that he expects the federal government will immediately make several changes in the Prairie Farm Assistance Act to bring it more into line with Manitoba conditions?

I should like to point out to the hon. member that on many occasions in speeches during the last six or seven months I have stated that at this session of parliament we would bring in amendments to the Prairie Farm