

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I have the answer to the question. The Canadian wheat board reports that as of Saturday there were eight ocean vessels loading grain at Vancouver and twelve vessels awaiting loads. The grain drying facilities at the terminal elevators in Vancouver are being used to capacity. In addition, shipments of dry grain of the grades required are being made from interior terminals at Calgary and Edmonton, and an increased movement of dry grain is under way from southern Alberta.

LAKEHEAD—REPORTED SLOW MOVEMENT TO ELEVATORS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce, notice of which was sent to him. Can the minister tell us what action, if any, the Canadian wheat board is taking or plans to take regarding the protests from several organizations at the lakehead, including the city councils, about the exceptionally slow movement of grain to lakehead elevators despite the considerable storage space available there?

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Trade and Commerce): The Canadian wheat board is giving priority to the situation prevailing at the lakehead. The difficulties there arise from the large quantities of tough and damp grain which have accumulated this year, and an extensive drying program is now under way.

At the close of navigation there were about 40 million bushels of elevator space available at the lakehead. In order to preserve space for the unloading of high moisture content grain and space for the storage of such grain after drying the board has for the time being suspended the shipment of dry grain to the lakehead. That accounts for the delay at the present time in filling up the capacity. It is due to the unusual difficulties prevailing this year with regard to tough and damp grain, of which it is estimated there are about 95 million bushels to be dealt with in the terminal elevators where drying facilities exist.

Mr. Fisher: Can the minister tell us whether this will mean a reduction in the normal expansion of delivery quotas given western farmers throughout the winter?

Mr. Churchill: Temporarily, yes; and it is quite understandable. The tough and damp grain comes from the northern areas of the three prairie provinces, and in order to move it out before spring comes, when damage may

[Mr. Howard.]

occur, it will be necessary to retard the delivery of dry grain from other areas. However, I think the farmers of western Canada understand the situation very well, are sympathetic to their northern neighbours who have this problem of tough and damp grain, and will accept the circumstances and be prepared to accept a delay. For those who have to accept a delay in delivery we have available the cash advance legislation which permits them to get money prior to making delivery to the elevator.

FISHERIES

BRITISH COLUMBIA—REQUEST FOR AID IN RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF HERRING INDUSTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries. Has the minister received any request for assistance to enable the re-establishment of the herring fishing industry in British Columbia, which has now closed down? If so, what action is being taken or what action is contemplated?

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Minister of Fisheries): Mr. Speaker, I shall look into the matter and reply to the question at a later date.

AIRPORTS

WINNIPEG—COMMENCEMENT OF WORK ON TERMINAL BUILDING

On the orders of the day:

Mr. John MacLean (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Transport if he has any information he can give to the house with regard to when contracts may be called for an immediate start on the airport terminal building in the city of Winnipeg.

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): Yes, I have, Mr. Speaker. I wish to thank the hon. gentleman for advising me of his intention to ask this question.

Instructions have been issued to advertise for sealed tenders for site preparation, excavation and caisson work for the terminal building at the Winnipeg international airport. Tenders for this work will be accepted up until 3 p.m. on February 18 next. Notice of this call for tenders will be published in newspapers and trade journals in the usual manner in the course of the next day or so.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonaville-Twillingate): I should like to ask the Minister of Transport if the plans for the Winnipeg airport terminal have been completed.

Mr. Hees: Yes, Mr. Speaker.