

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Marler: So I take it the minister was misquoted.

Mr. Hees: No, Mr. Speaker, the minister was not misquoted; he was quoted as saying exactly what I am telling the house now.

An hon. Member: Read the *St. John's News*.

UNION STEAMSHIP LINES, B.C.
—SUBVENTION PAYMENTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. F. G. J. Hahn (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the following question to the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transport. Perhaps it could be taken as notice. Has there been any change in policy in respect to payment of a subvention to Union Steamship Lines to carry cargo into the northern ports of British Columbia?

Mr. A. R. MacDonald (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transport I will take this question as notice and the information will be supplied as soon as possible.

FREIGHT RATES

STATEMENT ON EQUALIZATION PROGRAM

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue) asked what progress was being made with regard to the freight equalization program.

The board of transport commissioners is continuing to make progress with the freight rates equalization program. It had submitted an earlier report on action with regard to equalization of class rates. It has now submitted a further progress report regarding equalization of commodity rates. This further report has been forwarded to the governor in council, and I expect that it will shortly be tabled or otherwise made available.

[Later:]

Mr. H. R. Argue (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of Transport arising out of his statement that class rates are being equalized. Since those rates affect, I understand, only 10 per cent of the traffic, is the government considering any policy different from the one of further discriminatory increases in freight rates which may take place as a result of the present application? Has the government considered any policy different from that of allowing further discriminatory increases?

[Mr. Hees.]

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, these are all matters which are examined by the board of transport commissioners. I have reported to the hon. member the results which have been obtained so far from the examination that is being carried out, and I have given him a full answer to his question.

Mr. Argue: Mr. Speaker, I was inquiring whether the government itself is considering any change in policy, such as that brought about a few years ago by the \$7 million subsidy spent on maintaining trackage in northern Ontario. Is the institution of that type of policy being considered?

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, I do not know of any plan to encourage discriminatory freight rates. We have always been very much against discriminatory freight rates, and if at any time people in various parts of the country believe that freight rates are discriminatory, they have a perfect right to be heard by the board of transport commissioners in the normal way, and the findings of the board will be examined by the government in due course.

[Later:]

REQUEST FOR REDUCTION IN RATES ON GRAIN

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. A. Bryson (Humboldt-Melfort): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Transport. While I have not given him notice, there has been an exchange of correspondence between us with regard to this matter. Is the government taking any action at the present time in an attempt to reduce the very discriminatory freight rates on grain moving from the prairie towns to the lakehead?

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): This question, Mr. Speaker, has been and is being considered by the board of transport commissioners, and if there is anything to report to the hon. member in the future I will be glad to let him know.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

PRINCE RUPERT, B.C.—STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF PROPERTY FOR INDUSTRIAL USE

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I should also like to take this opportunity to answer the question asked yesterday by the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard). He asked if information could be given in connection with the disposal of certain Canadian National waterfront property at Prince Rupert, B.C.