

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. MacEwan: May I ask the minister responsible for shipbuilding subsidies whether he will give an undertaking to the shipbuilding industry of Canada that no change will be made in the present subsidized building program which means so much, especially in the Atlantic area?

Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Industry): I think the hon. member is aware that legislation outlining the new subsidy policy has already been proposed in the house by way of resolution. This will be the law.

POWER**COLUMBIA RIVER—REQUEST FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE IN DAM CONSTRUCTION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): In order to satisfy the curiosity of a number of people in British Columbia, including many supporters of the Prime Minister's party, I should like to ask the right hon. gentleman this question. Did Premier Bennett recently ask the federal government for financial assistance in building the dams on the Columbia under the terms of the Columbia river treaty and, if so, what was the government's response to this request?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): I am aware of no such request and I would be surprised if one were made, because there is no place for such a request in the Canada-British Columbia agreement on this matter.

PUBLIC SERVICE**REPRESENTATIONS RESPECTING RELIEF FOR RED CIRCLED EMPLOYEES**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. R. A. Bell (Carleton): May I ask the Secretary of State in her capacity as rapporteur for the Civil Service Commission to tell the house what consideration the commission has been giving to the demand made last Friday by the staff conference for immediate relief of red circled civil servants?

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State): I will ask my colleague the president of the Treasury Board, who is responsible for this aspect of the civil service, to answer that question.

Hon. E. J. Benson (President of Treasury Board): The matter of red circling is a long and involved one. My understanding is that the staff-side conference in dealing with the Civil Service Commission has agreed that the position with regard to red circling should be

[Mr. Winters.]

looked at as of December 31 of this year, by which time it is hoped that a great many people who are presently red circled will be out of that category, having been moved into other categories by their departments.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): As a supplementary question, is the minister saying there will be no relief for red circled civil servants before December 31 of this year?

Mr. Benson: On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, relief is taking place every day as departments are trying to take people out of red circled positions and move them into positions that are not circled.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF REPORT ON POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the submissions that have been made to him by the Letter Carriers' Union of Canada and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers that the joint parliamentary committee on Bill C-170 should not complete its sittings until it has received the Montpetit commission report, and that these unions be given an opportunity to make further representations, can the Prime Minister assure the house that he will accede to this request?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have been informed that this report should be available later this week or early next week, so I think there is no danger of the contingency to which my hon. friend refers.

TRADE**WHEAT—POSSIBLE FURTHER SALES TO MAINLAND CHINA**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. In view of the fact that the assistant commissioner of the Canadian Wheat Board has arrived in Peking, has the minister anything to report on behalf of the government regarding the possibility of further wheat deals with China? I know the minister does not speak for the wheat board, although I believe he should, but perhaps he could advise me what weight to give to this report.

Hon. Robert Winters (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I have no comment at the moment.