

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The press quotes the minister as having said outside the house something we were trying yesterday to get him to say inside the house, namely that Trans-Canada is being urged to take its planning as far as possible so that if the federal power commission rejects the application, construction of the Canadian route can begin immediately. I wish to ask the minister who is asking Trans-Canada to carry its planning as far as possible, the minister or the National Energy Board; and have Trans-Canada complied with this request and do they intend to carry their planning to the point where there will be no delay in proceeding with the Canadian section of the line in the event that the F.P.C. rejects the application?

Mr. Pepin: The answer to the second part of the question is both, the minister and the National Energy Board. I do not remember exactly what the third part of the question was; the difficulty with long questions is that they require long answers which I am trying to give at the moment. What I said to the press, and would like to have said in the house but could not, was that we were planning in order to make sure that immediately after the decision is taken by the F.P.C. we will be in a position to act, whatever the decision may be.

I did not mean that we intended to act immediately but that we would act immediately after the decision is taken.

If the hon. member wishes to remind me of the third part of his question I will be delighted to try to answer it.

Mr. Douglas: The third part of my question was whether Trans-Canada had agreed to carry its planning to the point where it would be able to begin construction immediately in the event that the F.P.C. turned down the application.

Mr. Pepin: That is what I said in quoting my own words from *Hansard* of January 19. The company is keeping us informed of its alternative planning.

Mr. M. W. Martin (Timmins): I have a supplementary question. In view of the news we were able to obtain last week, and particularly yesterday and today, according to which we can look forward to a two year postponement before we can get a decision on this, may I ask the minister whether we will

wait this long before any action is taken? Can no action be taken before we get a decision?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[*Translation*]

BRIDGES

CONDITION OF INTERPROVINCIAL BRIDGE
BETWEEN OTTAWA AND HULL

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Gatineau): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works. It is urgent, since its object is to prevent the loss of life in the area.

As several thousands of tourists will be coming to Canada's capital during the centennial year and will certainly wish to visit Hull, namely the French part of our national capital, are they going to see the city of Hull through this dreadful ugliness, this heap of scrap, namely the interprovincial bridge, the guard-rails of which are dilapidated and out of repair?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member could easily put this question on the order paper.

[*English*]

TRADE

PURPOSE OF FORTHCOMING MEETING IN
WEST INDIES

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce on the subject of the forthcoming conference at Saint Lucia in the West Indies in the hope that he will be less brusque and irascible than the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Mr. Diefenbaker: And more intelligible.

Mr. Churchill: Will the minister outline to the house at an early opportunity the objectives of his department at that conference?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is asking whether the minister will make a statement. I suggest that the answer to this question can only be yes or no. I do not think the member can ask that a statement be made now. It should be made on motions.

Hon. Robert Winters (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Yes, Mr. Speaker.