

Inquiries of the Ministry

order to bring about that type of general security plan, provided that is the decision arrived at, that will be best for our country.

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Claude Richardson (St. Lawrence-St. George): May I put a question, then, to the Prime Minister in relation to old age security. When is it expected, in view of the fact that circumstances are changing quickly, that this report might be received?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Because circumstances do change quickly it would be impossible at the moment to say. What we want is to have it brought in at the earliest possible date.

Mr. J. A. Byrne (Kootenay East): I should like to ask a supplementary question of the Prime Minister before he gets too enthusiastic about the United States plan. Does he realize that only 60 per cent of the people retiring are covered by the United States plan?

Mr. Diefenbaker: The number has been rising steadily. I have not the latest percentage. It is for that reason among other things that this full investigation is going to be undertaken.

Mr. Alistair Stewart (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, does the Prime Minister realize that he is wrecking the Liberal convention by this announcement?

[Later:]

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, in reply to the question put to the Prime Minister a moment ago by the hon. member for St. Lawrence-St. George (Mr. Richardson) may I say that I made a considerable study of the United States social security system, and my information is—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Marler: Let the minister stick to transport.

Mr. Hees:—that at the present time at least 90 per cent—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member wish to revert to motions?

[Later:]

Mr. Daniel McIvor (Fort William): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask my first question of the Prime Minister in connection with his statement about old age pensions. As I have had conversations with a number of United States citizens who wish they had a pension equal to ours, my question is this: does he not think that in every way our old

age pension and security arrangements are superior to those in the United States?

Mr. Diefenbaker: My hon. friend must have been speaking to these Americans since the increases were made by this government.

MOTION FOR PAPERS

IRRIGATION AND POWER, SASKATCHEWAN

Motion No. 47—Mr. Argue:

For a copy of all correspondence and other documents exchanged between the federal government or any of its departments, and the government of Saskatchewan, from July 17, 1956 to January 9, 1958, dealing with: (i) the building of power plants and electrical transmission lines within Saskatchewan; (ii) the construction of the South Saskatchewan river dam.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): This is acceptable, of course, subject to the usual qualifications.

Mr. Speaker: Subject to the usual qualifications with respect to correspondence with other governments, is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

FREIGHT RATES

REPORTED INTENTION TO INCREASE JOINT INTERNATIONAL RATES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. R. Argue (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I have a question I should like to direct to the Minister of Transport arising out of the filing of notice of intention to increase tariffs covering freight rates on goods coming into Canada and moving between Canada and the United States, the increase to take effect on February 1 of from 1 per cent to 10 per cent. I am wondering whether the governor in council will postpone the coming into effect of this increase as it affects Canada until March 1, so that it can also be considered along with the consideration given to the 3.6 per cent increase.

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): I wish to thank my hon. friend for giving me notice of his intention to ask this question. The newspaper report in question appears to concern the action taken by the United States railroads to initiate selective increases in rates within the borders of the United States, and to include therein the joint international rates involving their railroads and the Canadian railways.

All these respective railroads jointly filed with the interstate commerce commission in Washington, D.C., and with the Board of Transport Commissioners for Canada on December 23, 1957, to become effective February