

Inquiries of the Ministry

Canada. As a result, this situation is costing the industry millions of dollars.

Mr. Hellyer: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will be glad to check on the chicks, and make every possible arrangement to see that the needs of the shippers are met within the capability of the equipment available.

Mr. Woolliams: I know the minister is trying to be humorous, Mr. Speaker, but I am talking about all perishable goods. I am asking him whether he will make a serious representation to these companies to assist Canadian industry in the transportation of perishable goods.

Mr. Hellyer: Yes, of course, Mr. Speaker. I am sure they are already aware of the problem. I will be glad to pass on my hon. friend's representations, together with my own.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Transport. I point out that when the strike was first anticipated last week I asked the Prime Minister whether any consideration was being given to the matter of alternative forms of transportation for perishable commodities. He said that a committee of cabinet was doing this. When I asked him on Friday to what members the representation should be made, he named the Minister of Transport. Since that time, after contacting the minister's office and the Board of Transport Commissioners I can find no arrangements at all. I am wondering whether the minister would undertake to make a statement tomorrow as to what alternative arrangements have been made for the movement of perishable goods. I think in particular of perishable goods from Vancouver Island to the prairies, which are adversely affected by this strike. I ask the minister to make such a statement so that the public will know what arrangements he has made. At the present time we have been unable to obtain any information in this respect.

Mr. Hellyer: Mr. Speaker, if my hon. friend would like to give me specifics, such as the one he has just indicated, I would be glad to look into the matter. But as he knows, the Canadian Transport Commission have authorized a number of temporary routes, with the end in mind of doing exactly what has been suggested, namely providing service to the Canadian travelling public. I am sure that where excess space is available, cargo will be carried as well.

[Mr. Woolliams.]

STRIKE OF MECHANICS—DEPARTMENTAL AIRCRAFT TO HANDLE AIR FREIGHT

Mr. David Anderson (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Communications. I wonder whether the minister is now in a position to answer the question I asked him yesterday concerning the possibility of using D.O.T. and D.N.D. aircraft to transport the mail, so as to liberate freight space on C.P.A. and other air lines, thus making it possible for flower growers and other people to make use of commercial air transport services.

Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, my first responsibility is to ensure that the mails go through.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Baldwin: When do we start?

Mr. Ricard: You have not yet accepted your responsibility.

Mr. Kierans: We have not yet found it necessary to look for aircraft from D.N.D. Perhaps my colleague could liberate some of his own aircraft for the transportation of chicks across the country. We are quite satisfied at the moment with the facilities that are being made available to us to transport the mail across all areas of Canada.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, I would like to put this one, last supplementary question. Can the Minister of Transport tell us which crisis he will end the sooner, the housing crisis or the transportation crisis?

AGRICULTURE

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS IN COMPENSATION FOR LACK OF GRAIN SALES

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. As a result of the recent visit of the agricultural committee to the west, where they found ample evidence of economic stagnation, does the minister intend to recommend to the government that emergency assistance be provided, in line with the Prime Minister's concern over regionally depressed areas, in the form of acreage payments or any other form which would alleviate the situation temporarily, pending further action?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. gentleman knows, I returned to Ottawa just this morning. I am