

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

[Later:]

**Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier):** Mr. Speaker, may I refer to the matter which was discussed earlier and ask the Prime Minister if he or the government were informed in advance of the decision of the United Kingdom government to send forces to Jordan?

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian government was informed, and that brings me to something on which I secured some information this morning with reference to the attitude that should be taken by the United Kingdom government with respect to matters affecting the commonwealth.

In 1946 Mr. Attlee defined the arrangements which apparently were satisfactory to the then prime ministers of the various dominions in these words:

It is our practice and our duty as members of the British commonwealth to keep other members of the commonwealth fully and continuously informed of all matters which we are called upon to decide but which may affect commonwealth interests. The object is to give them an opportunity of expressing their views in confidence if they so desire. These views are taken fully into account but the decision must be ours and the other governments are not asked and would not wish to share the responsibility for it. Dominion governments follow the same practice.

I mention this because that statement was made in the British House of Commons during the commonwealth prime ministers' conference of 1946, but I would also add that it was made before the arrival there of the late prime minister Right Hon. Mackenzie King.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, if I may. Could I ask the Prime Minister whether there has been any exchange of views between Canada and the other nations of the commonwealth on these matters?

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, there was, in so far as Canada is concerned, nothing in the nature of an exchange of views.

**AIR TRANSPORT****REPORTED PROTESTS OVER MODIFICATION OF REGULATION OF NON-SCHEDULED SERVICES**

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier):** May I direct a question to the Minister of Transport. Has the minister taken cognizance of the protests from small plane operators with respect to the announcement he made in this house the other day allowing wide open competition in the granting of class "C" licences? Will he comment on the statement of a top air line executive who, according to the *Financial Post* of today, said that "this plan will mean a return to the dirty thirties when almost every company went bankrupt in the price

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war, and safety standards were thrown to the four winds"?

**Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport):** I wish to thank the hon. member for advising me of his intention to ask this question. The answer to the first part of the question is yes. The answer to the second part of the question is no.

**Mr. Chevrier:** May I ask a supplementary question. Has the minister given any consideration to the possibility, as outlined by these operators, that because of this easing of licences the insurance rates will be increased substantially?

**Mr. Hees:** This whole matter was very carefully considered by the government before the decision was made, and I believe it was the proper decision.

**FEDERAL-MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE****INQUIRY AS TO PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATION**

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillingate):** I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether there have been any recent developments with respect to the proposed conference with the municipalities, and particularly whether the government now contemplates having representation at that conference from the provincial governments.

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday a group of representatives of the association of municipalities again called on me with a view to ascertaining when it was considered by the government appropriate and convenient to call together an informal conference of municipal authorities. I then pointed out the fact that the president and other representatives fully realized that it was to be an informal conference and that having regard to the commonwealth trade and economic conference and also considering the rate at which the legislative program of parliament was being implemented, I felt there was no possibility of such a gathering before October 6. That is as far as we were able to go.

With respect to the latter part of the question, this being an informal conference for the purpose of ascertaining the views of the municipalities it is in no way to be considered as a dominion-provincial conference, and there will not be representatives of the provincial governments, as such, present on this informal occasion.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** May I ask as a supplementary question if the Prime Minister could say whether the government has advanced its