

Inquiries of the Ministry

by an updated analysis of the O'Leary commission's views. We certainly did not consult the chairman of that commission to see if he had updated his own views, but we made our own examination, subsequent to this report being received, as to the effects.

Mr. Fisher: Then I put this question. Is the Prime Minister absolutely satisfied that the steps that are going to be taken will have the remedial results that he indicated, without some kind of restriction upon *Time* and *Reader's Digest*?

Mr. Pearson: I can only say that we hope they will have that good effect.

TRANSPORTATION

CALGARY-REGINA—REQUEST FOR IMPROVED SERVICE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. I wonder whether the minister is aware of the transportation problem that exists on the prairies between Calgary and Regina. I believe this was brought to the attention of the former minister by the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Pascoe), in regard to transportation on the railways. The hon. member for Moose Jaw stated prior to Christmas that it was difficult to obtain reservations on the C.P.R. In view of the fact that this line is subsidized by the federal government, would the minister assure the people in that particular area that transportation facilities will improve?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I do not think I can give any assurance about what the Canadian Pacific Railway will do, but I will consider the various implications of the hon. gentleman's statement and see whether there is anything I can usefully say to the house about it.

Mr. McIntosh: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister also look into the possibility of reinstating the air line service known as the prairie milk run, to see whether this would alleviate the situation for the time being?

Mr. Pickersgill: I understand the air line was also operated by a private company, and it is probably not within the power of the minister to see that it is reinstated. But I will be glad to look into that question also.

PICTOU, N.S.—MAGDALEN ISLANDS—REQUEST FOR RENEWAL OF CONTRACT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. Russell MacEwan (Pictou): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport. In view of the telegram which

[Mr. Pearson.]

I received from the mayor of the town of Pictou and several businesses in the area, including G. J. Hamilton and Sons Limited and Maritime Packers (Canada) Limited, from whom I believe the minister has also received telegrams, would he give urgent consideration to the renewal of the contract of the Magdalen Islands Transportation Company, which operates its service between Pictou and the Magdalen islands?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I regret that the telegram does not seem to have reached me as quickly as it has reached the hon. gentleman. That is probably because it has to go through more hands before it gets to mine, but I will look into the matter and try to give an answer.

CANADIAN FLAG

SUGGESTED PLEBISCITE TO SELECT DESIGN

On the orders of the day:

Mr. W. H. A. Thomas (Middlesex West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. In view of the government's undertaking to provide the people of Canada with a distinctive national flag, has consideration been given or will consideration be given to allowing the people to make their own choice through a plebiscite or referendum from among several of the most popular designs, including the red ensign?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): All I can say at the moment, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the procedure which should be followed in this matter is that parliament certainly should be put in a position to decide for or against a particular flag. As to whether it would be desirable to have a popular referendum on this matter so that the people could choose from among a number of designs, I would like to give that matter very careful consideration before agreeing to it.

Hon. Paul Martineau (Pontiac-Temiscamingue): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the government intend to place parliament in a position this session where it can pronounce its decision on this question?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, our commitment was to have this matter before parliament for parliamentary decision within two years of being elected, which was last April.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Gregoire (Lapointe): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Does not the Prime Minister fear that, if he allows a discussion in parliament on the choice of a flag, it might give rise to a situation similar to what happened when we had