

the Minister of Finance if he has received any communications from farm organizations or others interested in relation to repair parts for farm implements.

Hon. E. N. RHODES (Minister of Finance): I have received certain communications, but I am unable at the moment to indicate from just what sources. An announcement will be made in due course with respect to the subject matter in question.

PELEE ISLAND CABLE SERVICE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. ECCLES J. GOTT (South Essex): I would ask the Minister of Public Works if he has received any report as to the cable service between Pelee island and the mainland, and whether one or both of the cables are down, and whether there is no communication; and if so, what is being done to maintain the service.

Hon. H. A. STEWART (Minister of Public Works): In reply to the hon. gentleman I am able to inform him that unfortunately both these cables are out of commission. The one between Pelee island and Leamington went out of commission on February 20, and the one between Kingsville and Scudder went out of commission on the first of January. These cables are repaired and maintained under the provisions of a yearly contract for the service, and the repairs will be made as soon as possible.

INQUIRY INTO COAL PRICES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. JEAN-FRANÇOIS POULIOT (Témiscouata): May I ask the Minister of Labour if the investigation into coal prices has been concluded, and if so when we shall have the report; and if not, when will the inquiry be concluded?

Hon. W. A. GORDON (Minister of Labour): So far as the coal investigation in eastern Canada is concerned, I believe that the evidence has all been taken and that the report of the registrar under the act is in course of preparation. I anticipate that it will be only a very short time before the report is concluded.

REPORTED SALE OF RAILS TO JAPAN

On the orders of the day:

Mr. THOMAS REID (New Westminster): I would ask the Minister of Railways if he can inform the house whether the press report is true, that the Canadian National Railway is selling rails to Japan, and if so, may I ask whether they are old rails or new stock?

Hon. R. J. MANION (Minister of Railways and Canals): I cannot give the hon. member any information as this is the first I have heard of the matter. I presume that the Canadian National Railways can sell rails to whomsoever they wish, but I know nothing whatever about the matter.

COOPERATIVE COMMONWEALTH

The house resumed from Thursday, February 23, consideration of the motion of Mr. Woodsworth:

Whereas under our present economic arrangement large numbers of our people are unemployed and without the means of earning a livelihood for themselves and their dependents; and whereas the prevalence of the present depression throughout the world indicates fundamental defects in the existing economic system;

Therefore be it resolved, that, in the opinion of this house, the government should immediately take measures looking to the setting up of a cooperative commonwealth in which all natural resources and the socially necessary machinery of production will be used in the interests of the people and not for the benefit of the few.

Mr. HARRY BUTCHER (Last Mountain): Mr. Speaker, a few minutes before the house rose on Thursday evening I had invited you to attend with me at an imaginary meeting to be held by the directors of the organization owning the ship of state to which I had formerly referred. At this interview we heard an imaginary salesman for an imaginary ship-building firm endeavouring to secure a contract to build a ship without giving any details or any plans and specifications. I had been prompted to use this illustration by certain statements made by the hon. member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Irvine) who had said that he and his party might be asked for details of their plan and that his reply would be: We are not called upon to give details. We are not in the dock; it is the old system and the old political parties which are on trial.

I have since been charged, Mr. Speaker, by very candid friends, with endeavouring to pour ridicule on the resolution submitted by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth). If that is the general impression, I much regret it. Nothing was further from my thought than a desire to ridicule a resolution sincerely proposed by any hon. member of this house. I simply wished by that illustration to point out how unreasonable it is to expect men who like to have at least some idea of the road they are invited to travel to accept so vague a proposition as that contained in the resolution.

It may be said that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has definite views