

this matter to see what infraction of international air agreements, if any, took place as a result of the flight of these Russian planes?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport): No, I have not, Mr. Speaker, but in co-operation with the Minister of National Defence I would be pleased to do so. I would be very surprised if they were flying in one of the commercial air lanes. To the extent that information is available, we will check.

FINANCE

INQUIRY AS TO WHITE PAPER ON FOREIGN OWNERSHIP IN CANADA

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister. In view of the statement by the President of the Privy Council in the house on Friday that he expects that in the very near future the government will be presenting new policies based on the findings of the Watkins report, does the government intend issuing a white paper before these new policies are presented to the house?

Hon. Robert Winters (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I think that is a matter that remains to be determined, Mr. Speaker. This was simply a report submitted to the government. It does not necessarily set forth the government's views, and won't necessarily be acted upon in this form. It will be a matter for study by the government and a determination after that study has been completed, I would think, as to whether or not there should be a white paper.

Mr. Hees: As a supplementary question, was the President of the Privy Council expressing the view of the government when he said he expected the new policies, based on the findings in this report, would be presented in the very near future?

Mr. Winters: I think that would require a determination of what the very near future is.

FISHERIES

POSSIBLE RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATION FOLLOWING PLANE CRASH

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (Queens-Lunenburg): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to

Inquiries of the Ministry

the Minister of Fisheries. In view of the statement made last evening by the premier of Newfoundland on a C.B.C. television program, that in his opinion the Russian planes intercepted last week were surveying Atlantic coast waters for possible contamination; and in view of the possibility of such contamination of these waters as a result of the loss of nuclear bombs near Thule, would the minister indicate what steps his department or the government are taking to clarify the matter, particularly because of the tremendous impact that such statements could have on fish consumption and on the entire fishing industry in the Atlantic provinces.

Hon. H.-J. Robichaud (Minister of Fisheries): Mr. Speaker, I listened last night to the statement by the premier of Newfoundland. He was expressing a personal opinion. So far as the federal Department of Fisheries is concerned, I gave our position on Wednesday, February 7, when I answered a similar question asked by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam. The situation is the same today as it was when I replied to that hon. member.

Mr. Crouse: As a supplementary question, in view of the large research base we have at Halifax I would like to ask the minister has any action been taken to determine whether there is any contamination as a result of this incident?

Mr. Robichaud: Mr. Speaker, I gave the assurance on Wednesday, February 7, that there was no radioactive contamination and that according to a report from the head oceanographer of the Fisheries Research Board, who had discussed this matter with members of the Atomic Energy Control Board, we had the assurance that there was no radioactivity.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, may I ask either the Minister of Fisheries or the Minister of Industry whether a team of experts from Atomic Energy of Canada has been sent to Thule to find out on a first hand basis whether there is any danger of contamination of the adjacent waters which might have an adverse effect on Canadian fisheries, particularly at the Grand banks.

Mr. Robichaud: I am not in a position to answer this question, Mr. Speaker.