

Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): This is a very far reaching question indeed which, as I have already indicated more than once, is actively engaging our attention.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY**HEARING OF APPEALS RESPECTING PASSENGER SERVICE**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. A. Olson (Medicine Hat): I wish to address my question to the Minister of Transport and ask him when the governor in council will be dealing with the appeals respecting the C.P.R. passenger train service known as The Dominion.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): As soon as possible, sir.

Mr. Olson: Can the minister define for us "as soon as possible"?

TRADE**WHEAT—FURTHER INQUIRIES RESPECTING SALE TO RUSSIA**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): I wish to address my question to the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Trade and Commerce, in an earlier statement concerning the protocol signed with Russia, indicated that shipments of grain will go through both the east and west coast ports. However, in reply to a question put to him on June 20 the Minister of Finance stated that shipments will also be made through Churchill. Will these be token or substantial shipments, or would the minister like to correct this statement.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): I have no reason to correct my statement. In the contract signed by the wheat board and the Soviet union, provision is made for shipments through Churchill if that is the wish of the U.S.S.R.

While I am on my feet let me answer a question which was put to me last week by the hon. member for Medicine Hat with respect to the flour content in the contract between the U.S.S.R. and the wheat board. It provides for the shipment of 900,000 long tons of flour during the three year period, which is the equivalent of 45 million bushels of wheat. In the first year the contract calls for 300,000 long tons of flour, which is equivalent to about 15 million bushels of wheat.

Mr. Korchinski: I have a supplementary question. Mr. Speaker, may I put the following question to the minister in view of the imminent recess of the house and since my question No. 587 has been on the order paper for almost five months. Can the minister indicate how much grain it is intended will be shipped through Churchill this year?

Mr. Sharp: Provision is made in the contract for shipment through Churchill, but that will depend upon the circumstances at the time and the wishes of the buyers. When we sell wheat we try to sell it to the best advantage, and we find it a very good rule to consult the buyers on their choice of ports. Generally speaking we try to sell them what they want at the places where they would like to receive it.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, and I wish to direct it to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Was a request made by his government through him during the discussions in Moscow to extend the former contracts for shipments of wheat to Russia, in view of the statement made by the Minister of Finance and by Mr. McNamara, head of the wheat board that irreparable damage has been done to the contracts? Was there a request to extend the contracts?

Hon. Robert Winters (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I am not sure I understood the full meaning of the hon. member's question. I think I had better take it as notice.

Mr. Woolliams: Maybe I could be a little briefer. Was there a discussion concerning the extension of former contracts for the delivery of grain—not the contracts which have been recently signed but former ones—because of the delay in delivery due to recent strikes?

Mr. Winters: The matter never came up for discussion, because I do not think any such question arises.

Mr. Woolliams: Then may I put a question to the Minister of Finance. In view of the statement by the Minister of Trade and Commerce and in view of the minister's statement that irreparable damage had been done by the strike, can the minister tell us what is the situation?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's questions sound like a cross examination. I suggest that his question is not acceptable.

Mr. Sharp: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I think the hon. member's uncorrected statement could do damage to our