

*Inquiries of the Ministry***TRADE**

REFERENCE TO PRESS REPORT—PROPOSED UNITED STATES TARIFF CHANGES

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Prime Minister and to ask him if he can amplify the information which has been given to the press and is contained in a statement in a Canadian Press dispatch that federal officials said today that if the curbs receive presidential approval Canada will have to consider some form of economic readjustment, possibly a withdrawal of tariff concessions equivalent in physical and psychological value to the United States restrictions imposed.

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker. I know of no such information given by Canadian officials to the press. All I would care to say at this time is that the Canadian government is aware of the latest developments in Washington relating to commodities of interest to Canada. We are, of course, very much concerned about the possibility, although I would not say the probability, of any action being taken against our exports and I may say that the United States government is fully aware of our views. We have kept almost continuously in touch with the U.S. administration on these matters generally and have emphasized our attitude in cases directly involving our trade. I am confident that in arriving at his decisions the president will take into account the wider considerations involved, including the repercussions on friendly countries. I am sure that he will be anxious to avoid actions which would seriously affect the trade of Canada and other allied countries.

FERRY SERVICE

STEVESTON-GULF ISLANDS—CONTINUATION OF SERVICE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Maurice Bourget (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, May 27, the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Pearkes) requested information regarding dock facilities at Steveston for Coast Ferries Limited operating between gulf islands and Steveston.

As my hon. friend is aware, this service followed the discontinuance of C.P.R. service which used a dock at Vancouver. Coast Ferries Limited without any permission whatever from the Department of Public

[Mr. Abbott.]

Works took over the use of this dock which was constructed for the exclusive use of dredging operations in the lower Fraser river. The dock in question was constructed for that purpose alone and not for public use. Dredging equipment which will use this wharf includes two dredges, two tugs, pontoon lines and fuel barges. There can be no doubt that if the important dredging program in the lower Fraser river is to be carried out this dock must be reserved completely as a base for dredging operations and maintenance, the purpose for which it was intended.

For reasons given above, instructions have been issued that Coast Ferries must discontinue the use of this wharf with effect from midnight, June 25. This will provide the company with adequate time to review alternatives. In this connection it has been suggested that the manager of the company might like to come to Ottawa and discuss with the department various alternatives which might be utilized after the 25th of June.

Mr. G. R. Pearkes (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a supplementary question? There is a second government dock at Steveston, I believe. Could permission be granted to the company to use that other dock?

Mr. Bourget: According to the information I have, investigations are being made at the moment to see whether the facilities of this dock can be used by the ferry company.

[Later:]

Mr. T. H. Goode (Burnaby-Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to ask the parliamentary assistant. I have written many dozens of letters to the department with regard to this ferry at Steveston. Why has not the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond been told that the ferry can continue to use that wharf only until June 25? This is the first I have heard about it.

Mr. Knowles: Well, well!

GRAIN

UNITED STATES SELLING POLICY—ACTION BY CANADIAN GOVERNMENT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): I have a further question to ask the Prime Minister arising out of the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew). Has the government made a strong protest against the attitude taken by the United States government in making provision for