

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

delegation to discuss this matter, and I have agreed to do so, together with two or three of my colleagues.

**Mr. Green:** May I ask a supplementary question? The sale is not under a condition that the drydock and shipyard must not be demolished?

**Mr. Chevrier:** The yard is being put up for sale by the Canadian National Railways. I have seen the terms. I have not them before me, and I would not like to give them from memory, but I should be glad to send my hon. friend a copy of the press release, together with the notice of tender. He will see there all the terms, together with the assets that are being sold.

**LABOUR CONDITIONS****CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS—REQUEST FOR FURTHER STATEMENT RESPECTING LAY-OFFS**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Transport? In view of the continuing lay-offs by the Canadian National Railways, can the minister make any statement that will allay the fears of railway workers that still further lay-offs are in prospect?

**Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Minister of Transport):** I think I have already given to the house some indication of the position. I can say at this time that these lay-offs have been necessitated because of a decline in traffic—I speak now, of course, only for the Canadian National Railways—due to a number of factors, one of them being the decline in the traffic in the United States. There are a number of connections made by the Canadian National Railways at border points with United States railways, and the traffic coming in from there has declined substantially. There is also a substantial decline in other commodities in several parts of Canada having to do with coal and grain; and there is also the factor, I am sorry to say, of dieselization, which has added to the difficulties.

I do not know what the actual figures are at the moment, but the last figures I got were in the neighbourhood of 1,500, and I have not seen the picture for this week. I know that the officers of the Canadian National Railways are most anxious to take on men just as soon as traffic conditions change. If there is any upswing in the traffic, then I am sure these men who have had to be laid off, unfortunately, will be taken on again.

**Mr. Green:** The minister gave a figure of the number of men who had been laid off by the Canadian National Railways. Is that figure all-inclusive, or is it in addition to the number given by his parliamentary assistant on January 22, which was 800?

**Mr. Chevrier:** The parliamentary assistant of course was correct as of that date. I am giving the figure I last saw which was one day last week, and it was in the neighbourhood of 1,500.

**Mr. Green:** That includes the 800 referred to before?

**Mr. Chevrier:** That is right.

**Mr. Winch:** I think we had better revise the ruling with respect to urgency in the unemployment situation. The situation is deteriorating rapidly, and seems to have deteriorated seriously in the past few minutes.

**FISCAL AND MONETARY MEASURES TO TAKE CARE OF UNEMPLOYMENT**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. J. M. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. Since I have not given him notice of it perhaps he would prefer to take this as notice and answer tomorrow. Can he tell the house something as to the fiscal and monetary policies which the Minister of Labour tells us are the means proposed to take care of unemployment?

**NATURAL GAS****INQUIRY AS TO DECISION BY FEDERAL POWER COMMISSION ON APPLICATION OF WESTCOAST TRANSMISSION COMPANY**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. E. D. Fulton (Kamloops):** May I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether the government is in possession of any information which it is in a position to pass on to the house regarding the possible date when a decision might be handed down by the federal power commission of the United States on the application of Westcoast Transmission Company for a permit to export gas, and any other information the government has in its possession regarding this matter?

**Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Acting Prime Minister):** The government has no official information on the point, but unofficially I have been informed both from Washington and from the office of the pipe-line company that a decision is expected early in April.