

Inquiries of the Ministry

ALBERTA—CONSERVATION OF WATER SUPPLIES

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Minister of Agriculture would consider, in view of the fact that the rains of the last few days have missed such substantial areas of dried out southern Alberta, sending officials of P.F.R.A. to examine the supplies of water available to irrigate crops and see that supplies are stretched out as long as possible? I can assure the minister that the concern of the people in this area is very great with such a heavy drain on the water supplies.

Hon. Harry W. Hays (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. member I must say we are pleased to see him back in the house. In answer to his question, I can assure him that I am in close touch with the provincial government on the question of moisture in the province of Alberta. I have lived there all my life and farm 5,000 acres, so I do know a little bit about it. We have to watch the situation very closely. This is a provincial matter and they must take the initiative, but at such time as they do the federal government will be on hand.

Mr. Hamilton: A supplementary question. Would the minister, with his great concern for the people of that area, consider going himself and seeing how dry it really is?

Mr. Hays: In reply to this question, Mr. Speaker, I am leaving tomorrow morning at ten to seven.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

NEGOTIATIONS WITH U.S. RESPECTING D.E.W. LINE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Gene Rheame (Northwest Territories): My question is directed to the Minister of National Defence. Are negotiations under way at the present time between the government and the United States air force regarding the closing down of all or parts of the distant early warning line? If so, what proposals does the minister have for alternative use of D.E.W. line installations no longer required for defence purposes?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of National Defence): Some changes are in contemplation, but no decisions have yet been taken. As soon as they have been made they will be announced.

TRANS-CANADA AIR LINES

WINNIPEG MAINTENANCE BASE—MEETING WITH MANITOBA DELEGATION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): I should like to ask the Minister of [Mr. Hays.]

Transport if he is now in a position to give the time and date of the proposed meeting between representatives of the cabinet and the delegation from Manitoba concerning the retention of the overhaul and maintenance base of Trans-Canada Air Lines in Winnipeg.

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Transport): Yes. Tuesday morning at nine o'clock.

Hon. Leon Balcer (Three Rivers): While we are on this subject I should like to ask the minister if he is aware that according to the president of T.C.A. the decision to maintain and overhaul all jet planes belonging to T.C.A. exclusively at the Montreal base was taken in 1956, by approval of the construction of the new \$20 million base, by the Liberal government of that day

Mr. McIlraith: No, Mr. Speaker.

[Later:]

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Veterans Affairs whether it is his intention to support the Manitoba delegation in its request for the retention of the T.C.A. overhaul and maintenance base in Winnipeg.

FINANCE

REPORTED INTENTION TO INCREASE GOLD PRODUCTION SUBSIDY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys. Is the minister in a position to tell the house whether the government is considering increasing the assistance under the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act, as he is reported to have mentioned at a recent meeting at the Seignior club?

Hon. W. M. Benidickson (Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys): The question is in reference to a speech I made to the Quebec metal mining association on Tuesday night. I do not think there was anything I said on that occasion which could in any way be interpreted as other than that the emergency mining act would come up for legislative review this session and would not likely be dealt with before, perhaps, the summer recess.

TRADE

OIL—REPORTED U.S. INTENTION TO RESTRICT IMPORTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Trade and Commerce arising