

Inquiries of the Ministry

paper and he will get a written answer, or perhaps he could bring it up at ten o'clock this evening.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would direct this question to the Prime Minister. Are representatives of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration meeting at the present time with various provincial representatives in order to secure from the provincial representatives acceptance of responsibility over Indians? Right at this very moment are meetings taking place?

Mr. Pearson: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, but if my right hon. friend had given me notice of this question perhaps I would have been able to get the most up to date information.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, possibly if the minister were in his place, where he should be, we would have an answer in the house.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, if in fact the conference to which my hon. friend refers is taking place, perhaps the minister is at it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: It is some of his juniors. [Later:]

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, again respecting this matter of the Indians I would like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Have the Indians, their bands or tribes, been consulted by the government as to whether they would be prepared to be transferred from federal to provincial jurisdiction? Second, will the Prime Minister give the house the assurance that in whatever discussions are going on at the moment, of which he has said he has no knowledge, nothing will be done to deal with the transfer of Indians from federal authority without the consent of the Indians themselves; because I am sure he will agree that any other course would be to place them in the position of being chattels.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the latter part of the right hon. gentleman's observation. So far as the first part is concerned, I shall give a detailed answer tomorrow.

AIR CANADA**TRANSSHIPMENT OF CARGO FOR JAPAN TO FOREIGN CARRIER**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stuart A. Fleming (Okanagan-Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question. [Mr. Pearson.]

tion to the Acting Minister of Transport. Can he advise the house whether it is the policy of Air Canada to transship air cargo to Japan by a foreign carrier rather than using the service of a Canadian air line that maintains a regular service to that country and has all the necessary facilities and aircraft based in Vancouver?

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Acting Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will take the allegations in the hon. member's question as notice and try to get some information on the subject.

TRANSPORT**PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATION AT BRIEFING ON RAILWAY LEGISLATION**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked a question of the Acting Minister of Transport, who promised to look into the matter immediately and inform me whether the government would invite representatives of the provincial governments interested in the railway legislation to attend the meeting arranged for Thursday.

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Acting Minister of Transport): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member asked me a question, as appears on page 8483 of *Hansard*, concerning the arrangement that had been made for members of the House of Commons to meet informally in private session to hear an explanation of the railway bill from officials of the Department of Transport, and to get background information on the subject. The hon. member asked that representatives of the provincial governments be invited to attend and I undertook to give the matter consideration.

The answer is that because of the nature of the meeting arranged for tomorrow it would be quite inappropriate to invite representatives of the provincial governments, particularly in view of the fact that most of the provinces most directly concerned with this legislation participated actively in the discussions after the MacPherson royal commission report was tabled and while the legislation was being drafted, and are already experts on the background information with regard to this complex bill.

Mr. Hamilton: As a supplementary question, is the minister aware of the fact that these provinces are of the opinion that they have received a pledge from the federal