

EDMONTON, DUNVEGAN AND BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. L. J. LADNER (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Minister of Railways (Mr. Graham) if any conclusion has been reached in connection with the negotiations for the operation of the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia railway by the Canadian National Railways, following the expiry of the operating lease now held by the Canadian Pacific Railway? If no conclusion has been reached, what is the standing of the negotiations at the present time?

Hon. GEORGE P. GRAHAM (Minister of Railways): Mr. Speaker, if my hon. friend thinks for a moment he will realize that the quarter from which to seek definite information is the Premier of the province of Alberta, who has the leasing of the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia railway in his hands. As a matter of fact that railway is now under lease to the Canadian Pacific Railway.

ARCTIC EXPLORATION AND SOVEREIGNTY

On the Orders of the Day:

Hon. H. H. STEVENS (Vancouver Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have in my hand a newspaper despatch from Washington to the New York Times dealing with a matter of very considerable importance to Canada. The despatch is rather lengthy and refers to what is known as the MacMillan-Byrd scientific expedition into the Arctic regions this summer by hydro-plane. Two important questions are propounded, one being whether Canada has a valid claim to certain lands lying north of the mainland. Then there is this reference:

High officials in Washington reiterated to-day that the Canadian government has not yet raised the question or discussed with this government the matter of claiming all land between Canada and the pole. It is learned, however, that in a recent informal conversation between Lieutenant Commander Byrd and the Canadian commission here, the latter informally asked whether he had obtained a "permit" to land on Axel Heiburg land. To ask Canada for a permit for Commander Byrd's planes to land on Axel Heiburg land would, of course, imply recognition by America of the Canadian claim of sovereignty over that land, and seems to necessitate decision by this government—

That is, the United States government.

—as to whether it considers that Canada has a valid claim to that region.

Has the Prime Minister any information to furnish as to whether the government of Canada has made any representations to the government of the United States on the subject? If no action has been taken, is there

not a grave danger that the right of Canada to large areas in the north—at present not deemed very valuable, but which in the future may be so—will be jeopardized?

Hon. CHARLES STEWART (Minister of the Interior): Mr. Speaker, this government has been very much alive to what we claim to be the possessions of Canada in the northern territory adjacent to the Dominion. Indeed, I made the statement in the House the other evening that we claimed all the territory lying between meridians 60 and 141. This afternoon when dealing with the estimates of the Department of the Interior I propose to bring down a map to make it clear what precautions we are taking to establish ourselves in that territory and to notify the nationals of foreign countries passing over it that we think Canada should be advised of their plans and that they should ask for permits from the Canadian government. That is the extent to which we have gone at the moment. I might say further to my hon. friend from Vancouver Centre that some considerable time ago a despatch dealing with the subject was sent to Washington, to which we have had no reply.

ALTERNATIVE VOTE

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. R. A. HOEY (Springfield): Can the Prime Minister tell us, Mr. Speaker, when we may expect the government to proceed with the legislation dealing with the single transferable vote? I understand that the Prime Minister, near the close of last session, gave a definite promise that the matter would be dealt with some time this session, of which we are getting pretty near the close.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): As my hon. friend is aware, there are two bills on the order paper relating to the Dominion Elections Act. One is before a committee of the House at the present time. As soon as the committee reports it is our intention to proceed with that bill, and when it is concluded we will take up the measure dealing with the single transferable vote.

Mr. HOEY: It will be disposed of this session, then?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: It depends on how long it takes. We have a good deal of material before us. We are going ahead as fast as we can.

EXPORT OF POWER

On the Orders of the Day:

Sir HENRY DRAYTON (West York): Mr. Speaker, may I ask my hon. friend the Min-