

G.W.O.—B.I.D. CONSTRUCTION COMPANY LTD

Question No. 3,465—**Mr. Howie:**

Since June 1, 1975, has G.W.O.—B.I.D. Construction Company Ltd., Fredericton, New Brunswick, been employed by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development?

Mrs. Iona Campagnolo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): G.W.O.—B.I.D. Construction Company Ltd., Fredericton has not been employed by the department since June 1, 1975.

COST OF ICEBREAKING SERVICES

Question No. 3,583—**Mr. Forrestall:**

What is the Department of Transport's best estimate of the cost of icebreaking services for (a) the Gulf of St. Lawrence (b) Newfoundland (c) the Arctic for each annual period from 1969-70 to the most recent available?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport):

	(a) Gulf of St. Lawrence	(b) Newfound- land	(c) Arctic
1969/70	\$3,232,000	\$ 671,500	\$2,570,300
1970/71	3,402,000	706,800	2,705,500
1971/72	3,698,000	768,300	2,940,800
1972/73	4,108,000	1,153,600	3,267,600
1973/74	4,669,300	970,000	3,713,200
1974/75	5,367,000	1,115,000	4,268,100

Dollars are represented in value for each year. There has been no attempt to escalate historical figures to reflect the inflation factors.

REDUCTION IN RAIL RATES—HALIFAX TO TORONTO

Question No. 3,603—**Mr. Forrestall:**

What is the Department of Transport's best estimate of the reduction, if any, in the rail rates for TEU containers from Halifax to Toronto if the present long term funded debt of the CNR were reduced by (a) 50 per cent (b) 100 per cent?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): If the long term funded debt of the CNR was reduced, there would not be any reduction in the above rail rates. One of the bases which is used, besides competition and service requirements to establish or revise rate levels, is the long term variable cost. The long term variable cost would not be affected by a new assumed CNR debt level, as the long term variable cost only includes charges for the level of investment necessary to move a container from Halifax to Toronto in this specific instance.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Question No. 3,652—**Mr. Matte:**

1. How many claimants received unemployment insurance benefits in 1973, 1974 and 1975?

Order Paper Questions

2. What was the annual rate of unemployment in Canada in 1973, 1974 and 1975?

3. How much has been spent for benefits in 1973, 1974 and 1975?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): In so far as the Unemployment Insurance Commission is concerned: 1 and 3. See Statistics Canada Publication 73-001 entitled *Statistical Report on the Operation of the Unemployment Insurance Act*.

2. See Statistics Canada Publication 71-001 entitled *The Labor Force*.

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[English]

STARRED QUESTION

Mr. J.-J. Blais (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to call starred question No. 3,559?

[Text]

*MERCURY POLLUTION IN LOWER ST. JOHN RIVER

Question No. 3,559—**Mr. Fairweather:**

1. What is the level of mercury contamination in the lower St. John River and how was it discovered?

2. What is meant by the description "lower reaches of the St. John River"?

3. Is the research report by the Department of the Environment biologist who found that several species of fish had levels of mercury exceeding the maximum considered safe by the government, a public document?

[English]

Mr. George Baker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, may I answer starred question No. 3,559? The answer to the first part, what is the level of mercury contamination in the lower St. John River and how was it discovered, is as follows: 1. Environment Canada has been operating regularly a water quality sampling network in the St. John River since 1974. That year, the average level for the whole river basin, including the major tributaries, was ten times higher than the normal background level in other areas of New Brunswick. These results were based on less than 10 samples for any one site in any one year. The 1975 data analyzed to date does not show the same pattern as in 1974. The mercury levels in water in July and August were much lower this year than last year, and it appears that the 1974 data may have been excessive.

The answer to the second part is:

2. The stretch of river between Fredericton and St. John which is estuarine is usually referred to as the lower reaches of the St. John River.

The answer to the third part to do with the matter of a public document is:

3. The research report by Dr. Michael Dadswell was given at a meeting in Fredericton in early November, 1975. A copy of this report can be obtained in writing Dr. Dadswell, Department of the Environment, Fisheries and Marine Service, Biological Station, St. Andrew, N.B.