

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, March 24, 1960

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

RAILWAYS, CANALS AND TELEGRAPH LINES

FOURTH AND FIFTH REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE—CONCURRENCE IN FIFTH REPORT

Mr. W. M. Howe (Wellington-Huron) presented the fourth and fifth reports of the standing committee on railways, canals and telegraph lines, and moved that the fifth report be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

RAILWAYS, AIR LINES AND SHIPPING

REFERENCE OF ANNUAL REPORTS, BUDGETS AND CERTAIN ESTIMATES TO RAILWAYS, AIR LINES AND SHIPPING COMMITTEE

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, by leave of the house I move:

That the annual reports for 1959 of the Canadian National Railways, Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships Limited, Canadian National Railways Securities Trust, auditor's reports to parliament in respect of the Canadian National Railways and of the Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships Limited, the budget for 1960 of the Canadian National Railways, the annual report of Trans-Canada Air Lines for 1959, the auditor's report to parliament on Trans-Canada Air Lines for 1959, tabled this day, and the budget for 1960 of Trans-Canada Air Lines tabled on March 1, 1960, be referred to the sessional committee on railways, air lines and shipping; and that items numbered 420—Prince Edward Island car ferry and terminals deficit 1960, 421—Newfoundland ferry and terminals deficit 1960, and 429—Maritime Freight Rates Act, as listed in the main estimates of 1960-61, be withdrawn from the committee of supply and referred to the said committee, saving always the powers of the committee of supply in relation to the voting of public moneys.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillin-gate): Mr. Speaker, before the minister resumes his seat could I ask him a question. Would the minister say whether the budget for 1960 of the Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships Limited is included?

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, I think even the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillin-gate knows that question is nonsense.

Mr. Pearson: Meaning that the hon. gentleman cannot answer it?

Mr. Hees: The hon. gentleman does not have to answer nonsense.

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Mr. Speaker: The motion is the following. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. Members: Dispense.

Mr. Pickersgill: Before the motion passes, I should like to remind hon. members who may have forgotten that last year the minister asked the leave of the house to amend his motion to include the budget of Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships. Apparently at that time he did not think it was nonsense.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

MONTREAL—REPORTED BREAKING OF SOUND BARRIER BY U.S. PLANES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence. In view of the radio news report that there was a loud explosion over Montreal at two o'clock this morning caused by two United States jet planes passing through the sound barrier, breaking windows and alarming Montreal residents, can the minister inform the house whether or not these planes were given permission to carry out this annoying and disastrous exercise over Canadian territory?

Hon. G. R. Pearkes (Minister of National Defence): I thank the hon. member for sending me notice of this question which I received just before coming into the house. I should like also to mention that the hon. member for Laurier (Mr. Chevrier) had a similar question.

I have received complaints during this morning from various residents of Montreal, but I have not received any reports of damage done. Apparently an air defence exercise was being carried out to test electronic countermeasures of the warning system. I have asked for a full report as to the occurrence and the reasons for the breaking of the sound barrier in the vicinity of a metropolitan area. Apparently the pilot did not realize, owing to the overcast nature of the weather, that he was over Montreal, nor did he know when he was making a quick descent that he was breaking the sound barrier.