

NATIONAL PARKS

TOLLS ON RIDEAU-TRENT-SEVERN WATERWAY—POSSIBLE CONSULTATION WITH CORTS COMMITTEE BEFORE IMPOSITION

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The minister stated in reply to a question asked by the hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington concerning the authorization of the first ever tolls on the Rideau-Trent-Severn waterway that he accepted full responsibility. In view of the fact that the CORTS Committee of the Rideau-Trent-Severn waterway made a very strong point of the fact that this is a unique waterway, the only one without usage fees, I would like to ask the minister whether he consulted this committee before taking this action.

Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, the committee was not consulted before taking this action because when the matter was discussed and approved by the Treasury Board, the CORTS Committee was not in existence. This is just a relatively recent development. I think it is three weeks since the committee was formed, so in fact this matter was a *fait accompli* before the CORTS agreement was signed and before the committee came into existence. I should mention that these fees only represent seven per cent of the operating costs of the canal system. This question was asked by an hon. member the other day.

Mr. Rynard: I would like to ask the minister if it was not on the suggestion of the federal government that the CORTS Committee was set up just for this advice. I think it has been set up longer than the minister suggests.

Mr. Buchanan: Mr. Speaker, the submission and approval of the fee structure antedates the establishment of the CORTS Committee, and the mandate of the CORTS Committee is far broader than simply this narrow aspect as far as its interest in dealing with the operation of the canals involved.

TOLLS ON RIDEAU-TRENT-SEVERN WATERWAY—PERCENTAGE OF TOLLS EXPENDED ON ADMINISTRATION

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): I would like to ask the minister what percentage of the 15 per cent will be spent in administration and for hiring the necessary people to look after the collection of the fee?

● (1500)

Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I presume the hon. member means what portion of the 7 per cent of operating costs? In other words, the revenues collected will represent 7 per cent of the operating costs of the canal system. I am sorry that I cannot give that information right now.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi on a point of order.

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, my point of order arises from the last supplementary of

Oral Questions

the hon. member for Rocky Mountain. May members on this side of the House ask questions without recognition from the Chair as well?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Longueuil.

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[Translation]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

REQUEST FOR HIGHER MINIMUM WAGE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jacques Olivier (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, I notice you looked in our direction. There are also some questions which should be asked by hon. members on this side of the House.

I have a question for the Minister of Labour.

Could he inform the House if and when he intends to raise the minimum wage because the people covered by the legislation on minimum wages need an increase?

[English]

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the cabinet has approved an increase in the minimum wage from \$2.20 as it is now, to \$2.60 effective July 23, 1975.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): It was published in the paper yesterday.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): This is a 40 cent increase, and will put it ahead of that of any other jurisdiction.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

POSSIBILITY OF NEW BUDGET IN VIEW OF HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT—SUGGESTED INCREASE IN PROCESSING RAW MATERIALS TO CREATE EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, I would personally invite the Prime Minister back to his seat. In the absence of the Minister of Finance, I should like to put a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the Conference Board has predicted that Canada's unemployment rate will reach 8.5 per cent by the end of this year with very little growth in the economy, may I ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of that, the government is considering bringing a new budget into the House immediately?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance is in Washington for the IMF meetings. I will relay the question of the hon. member to him when he returns.

Mr. Nystrom: A supplementary question. Is the Prime Minister now ready to instruct the Minister of Finance to bring in a new budget in view of the fact that the unemployment rate will be nearly 9 per cent by the end of this year?