

Orders for Returns
SKAGIT VALLEY

Question No. 695—**Mrs. MacInnis:**

How many letters, telegrams, briefs, representations or other communications have been received concerning the Skagit Valley in the period from June 30 to December 31, 1970?

Mr. Martin P. O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Economic Expansion): A copy of an explanatory report, prepared by F. F. Slaney and Company Limited, was received by the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

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QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

ESTIMATED FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FOR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS 1969-70

Question No. 63—**Mr. Broadbent:**

For the fiscal year 1969-70, what were the estimated federal government expenditures for (a) the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce Industrial Research and Development Incentive Act Program (b) Defence Research Board Defence Industrial Research Program (c) the National Research Council Industrial Research Program (d) the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce Program for the Advancement of Industrial Technology (e) the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce Defence Development Sharing Program and Defence Capital Export Modernization Program?

Return tabled.

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY IN CANADA

Question No. 170—**Mr. Harding:**

1. What was the total capital investment in the oil and gas industry in Canada, by province or other areas, for the years 1963 to 1970 inclusive?

2. What percentage of our total Canadian oil industry is (a) foreign-controlled, (b) Canadian-controlled, as of the latest available date?

Return tabled.

HALIFAX INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Question No. 561—**Mr. Forrestall:**

1. How much space is there in the main building at the Halifax International Airport?

2. How much space is used by the Department of Transport?

3. How much space is used by Air Canada?

4. How much space is used by other departments or agencies of government?

5. What other space is being used and by what interests?

6. Under each rental arrangement, what is the annual, or otherwise, rental in dollars?

7. What, with respect to Part 6 is the square area annually or otherwise?

8. How many people are employed by government departments or agencies at the Halifax International Airport?

9. What rental revenues are derived from the operation of the public parking lot?

10. What other revenues are derived from the overall operation of the Airport with respect to rentals?

11. What has been the total income from landing fees in each of the past 3 years?

12. What has been the income from the airport tax on aviation fuel sales?

Return tabled.

[Mr. Benson.]

● (2:40 p.m.)

Mr. Coates: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege affecting all hon. members. At the present time there are 20 questions standing in my name on the Order Paper. One of them, starred question No. 12, was also on the order paper of the last session of parliament. Your Honour made mention earlier of Standing Order 43. I think we are rapidly reaching the point where, if Your Honour is going to be credible in the House, when we have questions about matters that are not national in importance or urgent which have to be placed on the order paper, there must be some method of ensuring that members who make written inquiries of the government secure the information in question within a reasonable period of time. Starred question No. 12 is specific in detail and may require some investigation, but certainly it does not require an investigation that takes over one year in order to provide an answer. I suggest this makes a mockery of the written question system we have in this House.

I dislike having to get up and talk about this matter from time to time, Mr. Speaker, but if I am going to be able to secure information that I consider urgent and necessary for me to perform properly my duties as a Member of Parliament, surely I have some right to expect the government to furnish a written reply within a reasonable period of time. This is not happening and it has not been happening for some time. I believe this matter has to be referred to some committee in order to make a determination of the time period available to the government within which to provide an answer, whether or not either the government or the member asking the question considers the answer to be all the information. It is absolutely ridiculous for a question to sit on the order paper for two sessions and still be unanswered.

Mr. Jerome: Mr. Speaker, apropos the hon. member's point I will, of course, make a note of starred question 12 to which he referred.

Mr. Hees: That is good of you.

Mr. Jerome: But I think it is appropriate to point out that during the last week 75 replies have been taken care of.

Mr. Hees: What about the big backlog?

Mr. Jerome: If the hon. member would listen—

Mr. Hees: If you will say something we will be glad to listen.

Mr. Jerome: This brings our rate of reply up to the present moment, including some questions which have been answered only recently, to slightly better than 67 per cent of the questions posed.

I can also report to the House that during the past week I have personally contacted each minister and pointed out to him the questions that remain unanswered at the present time which fall within the remaining 30 per cent. They have undertaken to do everything possible to reply at the earliest possible moment. Therefore, Mr.