

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): This matter was not an item on the agenda at the ministerial discussions. No application has been made to the federal government to date to the best of my knowledge by the Seattle Light Company for a permit under the International River Improvements Act, so there is nothing to report as far as my department is concerned.

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TRADE

SUGGESTED VISIT TO CANADA OF REPRESENTATIVES OF CHINESE TOBACCO MONOPOLY

Mr. William Knowles (Norfolk-Halifax): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. First of all, I should like to commend him on the efforts of his department in bringing the Japanese tobacco monopoly to Canada and showing them all the aspects of our industry. My question is: Will he make the same efforts in an endeavour to bring the Chinese tobacco monopoly to Canada? I ask this question because, prior to world war II—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member cannot explain why he asks the question; he can only ask the question.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly have this possibility explored, and if there are any sales to smoke out that will be done.

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NATIONAL SECURITY

KIDNAPPING OF JAMES CROSS—NEW INITIATIVES TO OBTAIN RELEASE

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Solicitor General. In light of the fact that the government has apparently taken the position that Mr. Cross is still alive, has the Solicitor General any new initiatives to report to the House with regard to efforts to obtain the safe release of Mr. Cross from his abductors?

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Solicitor General): No, Mr. Speaker, I have no new initiatives to report to the House. I must say I am sensitive to the fact that it is impossible, when an investigation is under way, to keep the House advised from day to day as to just what steps are being taken. To do so would be to impede the work of the investigators. I am aware of that difficulty and I thank the House for showing its appreciation of that difficulty.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. With that observation of the hon. gentleman I am sure the House will be in agreement, but yesterday the minister of external affairs announced in London that as far as the government was concerned it still believed Mr. Cross was alive. Is that the view of the minister?

Canadian National Railways

Mr. McIlraith: I do not know, Mr. Speaker, that I should give my views on a matter of this kind. I have no reason to do other than to expect and to hope that he is alive, but I do not think my views are particularly relevant to this matter.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Gander-Twillingate.

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker, in the interest of co-operating with Your Honour, and in view of the fact we are now beyond the time allotted to the question period, I will wait until next week to raise my questions.

• (12:00 noon)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

PROVISION FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES, GUARANTEEING OF SECURITIES

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance) moved that Bill C-186, to authorize the provision of moneys to meet certain capital expenditures of the Canadian National Railways system and Air Canada for the period from the 1st day of January, 1970, to the 30th day of June 1971, and to authorize the guarantee by Her Majesty of certain securities to be issued by the Canadian National Railway Company and certain debentures to be issued by Air Canada, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

He said: Mr. Speaker, financing and guarantee bills, including the present one, have been introduced annually, with the exception of the 1963 bill which covered 1962 and 1963, and the 1966 bill which covered 1965 and 1966. The present bill has seven main objectives, most of which had a similar form in previous legislation.

First, the bill would authorize capital expenditures by Canadian National Railways, not exceeding \$229 million, during the 1970 calendar year. This level of expenditures compares with \$201,700,000 authorized for 1969. The bill also contains technical provisions authorizing Canadian National Railways to make expenditures not exceeding \$80 million between January 1 and July 1, 1971 for obligations incurred prior to January 1, 1971 and to enter into contracts before July 1, 1971 for capital expenditures not exceeding \$163 million for which payment will not come due until after 1970.

Second, the bill contains a provision authorizing Canadian National Railways to borrow \$12 million for financing all branch line construction. This amount includes the financing of branch lines in excess of 20 miles authorized by special statute as well as the financing of those lines under 20 miles which do not require special legislation. By covering all branch lines, the provision in the bill is consistent with the intent of reflecting in the financing and guarantee bill all the