

Inquiries of the Ministry

come about as a result of the prompting of the opposition—I ask the Prime Minister whether he will say now that the government intends to implement a procedure under which a standing committee on housing and urban affairs can be set up?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I would prefer that this matter, if it is to be dealt with at all, be touched upon by the minister responsible. I can say at this stage that there is no intention in my mind of recommending the establishment of such a committee. However, as the hon. member knows, I have an open mind on all these things.

Mr. Alexander: I am glad to learn that the Prime Minister has an open mind on this question. He will understand that in the absence of a standing committee on housing and urban affairs the new portfolio he is developing will have no credibility whatsoever in terms of participatory democracy.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

RETIRED EMPLOYEES' PENSIONS—ACTION TO IMPLEMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FOR INCREASE

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Transport. Will the government take steps, or has it already done so, to bring to the attention of the Canadian National Railways the recommendation of this House set out in the fourteenth report of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, tabled and concurred in a few days ago, concerning an increase in the pensions of Canadian National employees, in the hope that action on this matter might be taken at an early date?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will undertake to do that formally, but the slight tremor noted in Montreal on Tuesday seems to be pretty clear evidence that the CNR already knows of the action taken by this House.

FAILURE OF CHATEAU LAURIER HOTEL TO COMPLY WITH MINIMUM WAGE LAW

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question along the same lines. Has the Minister of Transport told the president of the CNR to have the Chateau Laurier and other CNR hotels pay the minimum wage in effect of \$1.65 an hour and to stop trying to cut down on the payment of its employees?

Mr. Speaker: Order. It seems to me that that question has already been asked.

[Mr. Alexander.]

POLLUTION

OTTAWA AREA RIVERS—ESTABLISHMENT OF WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Would the minister advise the House whether any steps have been taken toward establishing a water quality management area under the jurisdiction of the Canada Water Act to facilitate the cleaning up of rivers in the Ottawa area?

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, discussions are going on with the province of Ontario and the province of Quebec under the aegis of the consultative committees appointed pursuant to the philosophy of the Canada Water Act, both provincially and federally. I am very hopeful that we can achieve an agreement in the not too distant future which will embrace the two provinces and the federal government.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

PURPOSE OF TROOP MOVEMENT FROM QUEBEC TO MONTREAL

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I should like to inquire whether the Prime Minister or the Minister of National Defence is in a position to enlighten the House as to the purpose of moving 30 truck loads of troops to Montreal in the middle of last night, I believe it was. Was this just an exercise, or since it is alleged that most of the vehicles were of a medical services nature has the government of Quebec asked the federal government for assistance in connection with the provision of medical services in that province?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, this was a night training exercise between Canadian Forces Base Valcartier and Canadian Forces Base Camp Bouchard, and was not at all in relation to the situation referred to by the hon. member.

Mr. MacLean: I thank the minister.

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CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

INQUIRY AS TO APPOINTMENT OF NEW CHIEF COMMISSIONER

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board. How soon does he or the government expect to announce the appointment of the new chief commissioner of the Canadian Wheat Board? In addition, can he assure the House that whoever is appointed will not be someone who was either formerly or is at present in the private grain trade?