

LABOUR CONDITIONS

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF DR. HALL CONCERNING RAILWAY PENSIONS—DATE OF REPORT—SUGGESTION CANADIAN PACIFIC SHOULD MATCH ACTION OF CANADIAN NATIONAL

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Labour. Do the terms of reference given by the minister to Dr. Noel Hall include all aspects of railway pensions, both Canadian National and Canadian Pacific, and can the minister say whether there is any indication as to how long it will be before Dr. Hall makes his report?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, if my recollection is correct, the terms of reference given to Dr. Noel Hall were very wide indeed. As to the second part of the hon. member's question, I believe the report will take another two or three months. It is going to require some considerable time yet to complete it.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a supplementary question. Pending receipt of the report from Dr. Hall, may I ask whether the Minister of Labour or the Minister of Transport will be making representations to the Canadian Pacific Railway that it should at least match the provisions made by the Canadian National for its retired employees?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly take that matter into consideration and talk to my colleague.

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SOCIAL SECURITY

FAMILY ALLOWANCES—REGULATIONS DISCRIMINATING AGAINST ORPHANS

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. The minister will recall that last March or April when I pointed out that the new regulations under the Family Allowances Act discriminated against orphans as opposed to a child with one parent, he promised he would look at the regulations and make a change as soon as possible. Would the minister take immediate steps to fulfil his promise because the three orphans in the case I am talking about have received notice that they will be taken off family allowances.

● (1500)

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member very kindly for bringing this point to my attention last spring. The problem he raised is indeed a real one. I had asked my officials to examine this question and prepare the necessary amendments, but I cannot recall whether appropriate amendments were in fact introduced. I shall find out and report to the hon. member as soon as possible.

Oral Questions

[English]

POST OFFICE

CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS IN MONCTON AND RIVERVIEW—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Leonard C. Jones (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question either to the Postmaster General or to the Minister of Public Works. When is it intended to announce the erection or acquisition of a new centralized regional post office distribution centre in the Moncton area and also the erection or acquisition of a new post office building, and facilities, in the Riverview area?

[Translation]

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General): Soon, Mr. Speaker.

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[English]

TRANSPORT

RAILWAY SAFETY—GOVERNMENT ACTION ON REPORT OF CANADIAN TRANSPORT COMMISSION

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to that asked by the hon. member for Central Nova. I direct it to the Minister of Transport. It concerns railway safety. As the report of the Canadian Transport Commission on railway safety was a damning indictment of our record of railway safety, has the minister taken action on that report and, as a minimum, met with the railway companies to discuss the implications of that safety report?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, yes, I met with and asked the railways to tell us exactly what they are going to do in order to decrease the number of accidents.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

AMOUNT OF REDUCTION IN BUDGET AND METHOD OF ACHIEVING OBJECTIVE

Mr. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence. As the minister admitted in the House on Friday last that he was planning cuts in the defence budget, and as he did not deny that commanders are being asked to plan for a 30 per cent cut in operation and maintenance funds, can the minister inform the House if the 30 per cent or 35 per cent cut in operation and maintenance is to be based on and deducted from the 1974-75 budget year?

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I indicated in the House that we were trying to reduce expenditures to stay within the budget. We have not yet arrived at any set figures for operations but we are going to reduce capital expenditures. We will be cutting back on the number of personnel.