

Questions

DEFENCE PRODUCTION—EMPLOYEES

Mr. Thatcher:

1. How many were employed by the Department of Defence Production as at June 1, 1952?
2. How many employees are working for the same department today?
3. Since June 1, 1952, what divisions of the department, if any, have been discontinued?
4. If the materials division is still functioning, how many employees has it, and what are they doing since the abolition of all controls on materials?
5. If a reduction in the work of the department has permitted a staff reduction, how many employees were transferred to other government branches, and how many were told to seek employment elsewhere?

Mr. Dickey:

1. 1,760.
2. 1,644, as of December 15, 1953.
3. July 1, 1952—Building maintenance section—transferred to Defence Construction Limited. Sept. 30, 1952—Pulp and paper division. Nov. 30, 1952—Chemicals and explosives division. Sept. 30, 1953—Petroleum division.
4. The materials division is continuing to function until December 31, 1953. There are at present 16 employees in the division. This small group has been retained to deal with the expediting of materials and equipment from both United States and Canadian suppliers to meet defence requirements, and to deal with problems of production, consumption and distribution of basic defence materials. As certain controls are still in effect in the United States, continued Canadian participation in the United States priority and allocations system is handled through the division.
5. Since June 1, 1952, 88 persons have been transferred to other government departments and 34 persons have been released.

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS, B. C.—
REPEATER STATIONS**Mr. Fulton:**

1. Are the repeater stations on the northern British Columbia and Yukon lines of the government telegraph and telephone system included in the sale of the said system to the British Columbia Telephone Company and Canadian National Telegraph Company?
2. If so, to which company will they be sold?
3. By whom will they be operated?
4. How many such stations are there, where are they located, and when were they built, respectively?
5. What was the total cost of construction?

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS, B. C.—
EQUIPMENT AND COST**Mr. Fulton:**

In connection with the government telegraph and telephone system in British Columbia and the Yukon:

[Mr. Campney.]

1. How many telephones are there in use on the whole system?
2. How many exchanges, with how many switchboards respectively, and where is each located?
3. How many poles?
4. How many miles of wire?
5. How many miles of copper wire?
6. What is the net cost (installed) of the above totals of telephones, exchange switchboards, poles (with insulators and pole hardware) and wire respectively?

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS, B. C.—
SERVICE, RATES, ETC.**Mr. Fulton:**

In connection with the projected sale of the government telegraph and telephone service system in British Columbia and the Yukon to the British Columbia Telephone Company and Canadian National Telegraph Company respectively:

1. What assurances have been given or are being required from the British Columbia Telephone Company regarding the continuation of telephone service on branch lines?
2. What, if anything, is being written into the agreement of sale concerning the principles by which the purchasers will be bound with respect to, or the conditions under which they will be entitled to demand, an increase in rates?
3. What arrangements have been made or are contemplated to ensure that the transfer is made with the minimum disadvantage to present employees of the government system relative to continuation in employment in their present positions or in positions of similar status with the new owners, and with respect to their superannuation rights?

Mr. Chevrier: May I say a word about these questions. With reference to the first two, I had indicated earlier that it was not possible within a reasonable time for the department to answer these questions fully. I have learned that the hon. member has had some conversations with the officers of the department, and to the extent that it is possible to answer those two questions they will proceed to do so. I hope that will meet with the satisfaction of the hon. member.

With reference to the third question, I still find myself in the position of not being able to answer it until after the agreement for sale has been completed. Because of that, I would hope the hon. member would see his way clear to dropping it.

Mr. Fulton: I thank the minister for the information he has given me concerning the first two questions. With regard to the third question, as the result of a conversation with the minister I appreciate the position he takes, that he is unable to answer it now. I would just make this short observation, that the question does indicate the nature of my concern, and while agreeing to withdraw the question I hope I may be allowed to say that I trust the interest of those concerned in the matters referred to will be protected in the negotiations with the company. Under those circumstances, I would ask leave to withdraw