

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

INVESTMENT IN UNITED STATES RAILWAY LINES

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Madam Speaker, the question concerns CP's \$150 million expenditure and CN's \$300 million expenditure. Would the Minister answer the question? How can railways in Canada insist on moneys from grain producers and taxpayers to build lines here while they can afford to invest in over 4,000 miles of United States railway lines, to the tune of about \$600 million in Canadian funds?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I already answered the question the other day when I ventured the opinion that the presence of Canadian owned railway companies in the United States was beneficial to Canadian exports. These are services rendered by companies and consequently it is a form of export which is very beneficial to the country as a whole. Would my hon. friend prefer to have U.S. railways operating in Canada?

Mr. Benjamin: No.

Mr. Pepin: Consequently it is beneficial for Canada to operate these railways in the United States because it is part of Canadian services and Canadian exports to the United States.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

NATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Approximately two years ago the Minister announced a fund of \$345 million, as I recall, to be used for various Indian programs across Canada. The Minister has not yet announced any specific payments out of that fund.

A few weeks ago the Minister announced a committee to help dispense those funds. As I recall, it was to be composed of Members of the Liberal caucus. Once again there have been no payments as a result of that. One committee in particular, the agricultural committee of Ontario for the natives, has been waiting. I have been talking to the Minister and his staff for almost two years. When will we see some of that \$345 million which was promised so long ago?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, with regard to the \$345 million, the Minister responsible for that is my colleague, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, essentially because it deals with the Métis, Inuit and all Natives, not just status Indians for whom I am responsible. In particular, the Métis have an interest in this matter. That is why it is not only a concern to the Indians but to the people for whom the Hon. Member is concerned. Therefore I would suggest that he direct his question to my colleague, the Minister responsible for small business.

Petitions

• (1500)

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Madam Speaker, if I had time I would ask everyone over there. Obviously in order to get that answer the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development had to ask the Prime Minister. Because it is an agricultural problem I have already employed not the small but the great help of the Minister of Agriculture. Since I do not yet have any money, would the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce or the Minister responsible for small business tell us when and if, or if it is ever going to be spent, namely the \$345 million that was promised by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, I am told that my colleague, the Minister responsible for small business, is not in the House. Let me just assure the Hon. Member that although undeniably there have been delays in making announcements under this particular fund, the Minister responsible for small business will be in the House shortly. I can assure the Hon. Member that attention will be given to this matter and announcements will be forthcoming relatively soon.

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PETITIONS

MR. SKELLY—ABSENTEE BALLOTING

Madam Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the Clerk of the House has laid upon the Table the report of the Clerk of Petitions stating that he has examined the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Comox-Powell River (Mr. Skelly) on Friday, May 20, 1983 and finds that the petition meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PETITIONS

RETENTION OF CROWSNEST PASS RATE

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present to the House of Commons a petition signed by a significant number of western Canadian farmers who want to bring to the attention of the House the problem that western Canadian farmers will face in the event that the proposed changes to the Crow rate take place. They have humbly prayed that western Canadian farmers now paying \$131 million to move export grain under the Crow freight rate will have to pay significantly more than they can afford.