

Oral Questions

program, CN Marine had prepared early this fall a request to Cabinet for a 4 per cent increase in its fare charges on the Gulf and ferry coastal boat system in Atlantic Canada. Would the Minister confirm that, subject to last Thursday's financial statement, this request to Cabinet for a 4 per cent increase in fares has been withdrawn and that a submission to Cabinet for an approximate 15 per cent increase has been prepared for implementation, subject to cabinet approval?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the Cabinet document of which the Member speaks. It is true that there is a proposal to increase the fares on ferry services up to 15 per cent. However, there is also allowance for a reduction of 10 per cent for those who are regular users. It will give CN Marine some flexibility in applying a new fare structure in order to generate some more revenue.

Mr. Tobin: In any case it is an increase for everybody.

IMPACT ON TOURISM

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber-Port au Port-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, in light of the Government's stated commitment to tourism in Atlantic Canada, will the Minister tell the House if an analysis has been made by his Department or that of his colleague, the Minister of State for Tourism, to assess the negative impact on tourism in Atlantic Canada as a result of increasing rates to consumers by 300 per cent more than had been anticipated under the post six and five program?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is exaggerating the point. The fact of the matter is that there is a certain amount of flexibility that can be taken into consideration. I am sure that flexibility will be taken into account to reflect the considerations of the tourist industry. I will be meeting with my counterparts from the Atlantic provinces to discuss ways and means to implement those increases in a fair, orderly, and equitable manner.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

UNITED STATES—ACID RAIN RESEARCH PROGRAM

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. I hope that my relationship with that Minister will be every bit as cordial as my relationship with my former nemesis in the House, the former Minister of National Health and Welfare, who was one of the few Liberals to depart this scene with honour.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blaikie: My question concerns reports that the U.S. Government is cutting back on its acid rain research program while pretending to give the problem a high profile. Does she intend to look into this cut-back on the part of the American

Government? While doing so, would she also take steps to reverse the cancellation announced by the Minister of Finance of the Herring Gull Egg Project for the surveillance of toxic chemicals and wildlife in the Great Lakes, which is part of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement with the United States, so that whatever protests she may make to the United States would have some credibility because we in Canada are doing our part with respect to the environment?

[Translation]

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I hope indeed to have cordial relations with all Hon. Members. Ours is a cordial Government.

Like the Hon. Member, I have seen a news report of a labour union reference to the reduction by the United States of acid rain research funding. After I have reviewed the matter and determined whether this is a fact or simply a labour union strategy I will be in a position to answer.

With respect to the jobs that we have eliminated in research on certain aspects of wildlife, those cuts are rather minor, in view of the \$27 million my department is still putting in toxicological research and the \$150 million put in by the Canadian Government.

● (1450)

[English]

CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, the cuts are not minimal. The Canadian Wildlife Service has been savaged by the Government. Does the Minister of the Environment intend to sit idly by and allow this inauspicious beginning to her career as Minister of the Environment by allowing the Minister of Finance to cut out the toxicology research centre, to savage the Canadian Wildlife Service, and basically to start out as the Minister of the Environment in a way that sends out completely wrong signals to people who are concerned about the environment? Will the Minister of the Environment speak to the Minister of Finance about the cuts which destroyed all the credibility that she ever had to begin with?

[Translation]

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I am being subjected to the worst predictions because the credibility I have not been able to establish in this House so early in my mandate is already undermined, completely destroyed. Be that as it may!

The Hon. Member will be interested to learn that out of the 2,846 person-years involved in Ontario, including in the area of wildlife, 34 jobs have been eliminated. I would not that this is the end of the world.