

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Yes, Mr. Speaker. There has been an agreement between the province of Nova Scotia and the federal government, which is represented by my department in a technical capacity and by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion in a financial capacity, for the examination of additional coal deposits in the province other than those now under the jurisdiction of the Cape Breton Development Corporation. In effect there is a coal inventory program under way with regard to possible coal developments in other parts of the province. The estimated cost is about \$1.3 million and the time for completion of the inventory will be about three years. As I say, my department will be responsible from the technical standpoint for providing advice under the general financial aegis of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion.

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SOCIAL SECURITY

SUGGESTED PAYMENT OF PENSIONS TO PERSONS BETWEEN 60 AND 65 WHO ARE NO LONGER EMPLOYED

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the justifiable complaints of many persons between the ages of 60 and 65 against the unfairness of their not being included in the proposed legislation regarding pensions, and despite there not being unanimous consent for the motion I moved earlier, will the minister give consideration to reviewing the proposed legislation and make pensions available across the board to those who are out of the labour market.

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I have already answered that question several times.

[English]

When a statement was made announcing this measure, it was made clear that this was an interim measure to help couples, one member of which is over 65. It was stressed that, indeed, the problems to which the hon. member has referred would not be answered under such a formula. The solution is not through bringing about a broad expansion or lowering of general pension benefits to those who are 65, 55 or 50, but through a system of guaranteed income or income supplementation which would be payable to all, regardless of age, condition, or sex.

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF GUARANTEED ANNUAL INCOME

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. As the minister himself has said, the Prime Minister pointed out these defects during the election campaign. Accordingly, can he now say how long the interim period will be before the guaranteed income is implemented across the board?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I refer the hon. member to the working document which was tabled in this House in

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April, 1973, which suggested a certain time span for implementation of proposals which, I hope, will be agreed to next spring by the provinces before implementation of the recommendations. As to what the timetable will be after that, I am afraid I cannot say specifically at this time.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

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TRANSPORT

REQUEST FOR EXPLANATION OF APPOINTMENT OF ACTING DEPUTY MINISTER

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. In view of the admission of the Minister of Transport that there is a substantial mess in transportation, can the Prime Minister explain the rationale, if any, of appointing as acting deputy minister of transport a man who has no experience in transportation and whose only claim to fame is that he made a mess of the Prime Minister's 1972 election campaign.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, if the person alluded to by the hon. gentleman is the one I have in mind, let me say that he was chosen by the Public Service Commission. It is a well known practice that exempt staff of ministerial offices are eligible to examination and acceptance by the Public Service Commission. I cannot see the basis of the complaint.

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INFORMATION

SUGGESTED DISCUSSIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER OF SWEDEN ON FREEDOM OF ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Prime Minister, who I assume will be holding discussions with the Prime Minister of Sweden, if he will discuss with that distinguished gentleman the provisions regarding freedom of access to government information which prevail in that country, hopefully as a basis for eliminating the concealment, deviousness and secrecy which afflict this government.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, without conceding the conclusions of the question, I tell the hon. gentleman that guidelines which were adopted were made after careful study of the Swedish practice. We felt that ours are, in every meaningful sense, as liberal as theirs. I would be interested to hear of any other reforms the hon. member might like to import from Sweden.

Mr. Baldwin: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I say to the right hon. gentleman that there is a private member's public bill in my name on the order paper which goes far beyond the practice of this government or the government of Sweden.