Canadian National Railways

MAIN ESTIMATES, 1971-72

REFERENCE OF VOTE L10 AND VOTE 5 TO STANDING COMMITTEES

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 59 I should like to move, seconded by the Minister without Portfolio from Longueuil (Mr. Côté):

That the following items in the estimates of sums required for the service of Canada for the year ending March 31, 1972, be referred to the following standing committees:

To the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs vote L10 relating to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

To the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works vote 5 relating to the Department of Public Works.

I should explain that it is my understanding that this now completes reference of the estimates to the committees in accordance with discussions which I believe have taken place.

Motion agreed to.

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TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

REFERENCE OF QUESTION OF FINANCIAL STRUCTURE OF CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS TO STANDING COMMITTEE

On the order: Government Notices of Motions:

February 24, 1971—The President of the Privy Council:

That the question of the financial structure of the Canadian National Railways be referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Section 2 of Standing Order 21 this Government Notice of Motion is transferred to and ordered for consideration under government orders at the next sitting of the House.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I believe there would be unanimous agreement to pass this motion now without debate.

Mr. Speaker: Is this the wish of the House?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (for the President of the Privy Council) moved:

That the question of the financial structure of the Canadian National Railways be referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

Motion agreed to.

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

BILINGUALISM

APPLICATION OF ARMED FORCES POLICY TO OTHER FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND CROWN CORPORATIONS

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the document just tabled by the Minister of National Defence setting out the directions in respect of bilingualism in the Department of National Defence, now that government policy has been defined in the military services are the same levels of bilingualism to be attempted for civilian employees in other federal departments and Crown corporations?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Well, Mr. Speaker, the idea of bilingual units or unilingual units in various sections of the government service has been explained to the House on previous occasions. I believe that all the Department of National Defence is doing is applying this idea to its own department but in a way, of course, which is particular to it and cannot be transposed identically to other parts of the government.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, from the Prime Minister's answer are we then to understand that there will be different degrees of bilingualism within different departments of the federal service?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of what the member is referring to when he talks of different degrees of bilingualism. Some people can speak better than others, yes.

Mr. Nowlan: I quite appreciate that some people can speak better than others and that some are better at pantomine than others. That really was not the question. The document which has been tabled sets out different levels of bilingualism for the services and I am attempting to find out if the levels of 40 per cent and 35 per cent for the different ranks within the services in 1976 and 60 per cent and 55 per cent in 1980 are to be the levels that are to be attempted in other federal departments and Crown corporations. That was what I was trying to say.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, this document refers to the Department of National Defence and it has particular application, as I just answered. There is no indication that these percentages will be applied elsewhere. If some system of percentages is to apply it will be announced in due course. On the application of these it would be preferable if the hon. member would ask the Minister of National Defence who is better briefed than I am on what goes on in his department.

ARMED FORCES POLICY—METHOD OF ATTAINING PERCENTAGE LEVELS

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, without debating with the Prime Minister whether there