

TRANSPORT

BRITISH COLUMBIA—REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE FERRY SERVICE ON NORTHWEST COAST

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. In view of the fact that the premier of British Columbia has disregarded the legitimate interests of the people on the northwest coast of British Columbia by refusing for the time being to put back into service the ferry *Queen of Prince Rupert*, can the minister undertake to look into this question to ascertain whether his department can provide any means of transportation between the two areas formerly served by the *Queen of Prince Rupert*?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport): I will be glad to take this question under advisement.

PUBLIC SERVICE

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF BOXING DAY HOLIDAY

On the orders of the day:

Hon. R. A. Bell (Carleton): May I ask the President of the Treasury Board if the Treasury Board and cabinet would not reconsider the decision to deny the public service the customary Boxing day holiday.

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of National Revenue and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, the public service have as holidays New Year's day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria day, Dominion day, Labour day, Thanksgiving, Remembrance day, Christmas day and one other day chosen by the deputy head. This day may be Boxing day for some people in the public service. I should like to indicate that the extra day's holiday would cost between \$4 million and \$5 million, which I think is too much.

[Later:]

Mr. R. A. Webb (Hastings-Frontenac): I wish to direct my question to the Minister of National Revenue. Since the minister has stated that the Boxing day holiday for civil servants will not be allowed because of the cost, I wish to ask him whether he has estimated the cost of the lush party that is to be held on parliament hill on Friday night, which will only affect a small segment of the Canadian people.

Mr. Benson: I have not the details, but of course the matter falls within the purview of the Secretary of State. The amount of money

Inquiries of the Ministry

that is involved is very, very small when compared with the amount of money involved with respect to the first part of my hon. friend's question.

[Later:]

Mr. Benson: I should like to complete my answer to the hon. member for Hastings-Frontenac. I have been informed that the party being held Friday night is to encourage children in Canada to make gifts in kind and in money to assist international children's agencies, in the hope that similar meetings will be held across the country. I am sure the hon. member would be in favour of this objective.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

INQUIRY AS TO ACTION TO MEET UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the number of Canadians unemployed increased by 20 per cent during the last 12 months and increased by 14 per cent during the four weeks between October 15 and November 11—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the hon. gentleman would put his question.

Mr. Hees: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was just getting to that. Does the government intend to introduce, before the Christmas recess, measures which will stimulate employment and the economy of this country?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): My hon. friend, as sometimes happens, has his percentages wrong. The increase in question was referred to by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics as relatively small. The increase is, of course, to be regretted, but my hon. friend, will I know, take some satisfaction from the fact that the figures are much lower than they were when he was minister of trade and commerce.

Mr. Hees: May I ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the Prime Minister read the release from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, "Labour force, employment and unemployment"—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. gentleman is now entering into an argument.