

Inquiries of the Ministry

Could he advise whether he intends to implement shortly a recommendation of the coroner jury which studied the circumstances of the crash in Toronto, July 5 last, of an Air Canada DC-8, to the effect that in the future air passengers be provided with identity cards bearing their fingerprints?

[English]

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I have seen a reference to the coroner's inquest but only in the news media. I would prefer not to comment until I have seen a formal copy of the recommendation of the coroner's inquest.

* * *

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY**OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS TO EXPRESS VIEWS PRIOR TO ACTION ON TOLLS**

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport of which I have given him notice. In view of the recommendation contained in the study made for the minister by D. W. Carr and Associates that the government should unilaterally increase tolls on the St. Lawrence Seaway by 5 per cent annually for the next five years to recover part of the operating costs of the seaway, in view of the great pressure being put on the government by the United States government to raise seaway tolls, and in view of the news report from Washington yesterday which quotes the minister as saying it is highly likely that Canada will inform the United States of its desire to renegotiate the scale of St. Lawrence Seaway tolls, would the minister assure the House that the government will take no action until this very important matter has been thoroughly discussed by the House because of the great impact it can have on the economy of the country?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will try to go quickly through the various phases of that question. In the first instance, I have already indicated there will be no change in seaway tolls in the coming season of 1971. The government has decided that the existing rate of tolls will prevail except for the known increase that is to take place in respect of the Welland canal, which has been under way for four years. On the second matter of the reopening of discussions with the United States, I should be the last person perhaps to fall back on the claim that I was misquoted, but I did not indicate that we would open them purely and solely to deal with the question of increasing the tolls. There are a great many matters involved in our relations with the United States and it is to discuss the whole range of these that the discussions will take place. Finally, with your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, may I say that the reason for releasing the Carr report at this time is to get full representations from all parties concerned with the seaway operation, and of course we have indicated that we will make no decision until after that. I am sure

[Mr. Godin.]

parliament will have ample opportunity to examine the report and perhaps even examine witnesses before a decision is reached.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps we might now go to the related questions raised a moment ago, first by the hon. member for Saint John-Lancaster.

* * *

AIR CANADA**LAY-OFFS OF EMPLOYEES—REQUEST FOR REPORT ON MINISTER'S DISCUSSIONS WITH CORPORATION**

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Will the minister report on discussions with Air Canada as to the possible abatement of lay-offs, particularly in areas like Saint John and Yarmouth?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the question concerns the possibility of ameliorating the situation of Air Canada employees who have been given notice. I have been in daily contact with the officials of Air Canada. I understand they are discussing this matter with the unions concerned as well as with officials of the Department of Labour. They are disposed to try to soften the blow as much as they possibly can. They have indicated that their talks should conclude over the weekend, and I would hope for some word early next week.

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, will the minister give us every assurance that there will not be extra lay-offs in any one area, that if there have to be lay-offs they will be across the board, and that there will not be a diminution of service in any city?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, I think this would certainly be one of Air Canada's intentions and I will transmit it in the words of the hon. member.

* * *

LABOUR CONDITIONS**UNEMPLOYMENT—REQUEST FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA FOR PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS**

Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey): I have a question I want to direct to the attention of the Acting Prime Minister. Having in mind the demonstration by unemployed youths at the opening of the British Columbia legislative session in Victoria yesterday and the generally black picture of unemployment in that province, has any request been received from the provincial government urging that additional federal aid be given in the form of useful public works projects?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker. Of course, the province of British Columbia is participating, as are all other prov-