

Inquiries of the Ministry

ATOMIC RADIATION—CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Mr. Castleden:

What are the conclusions of the officials of the Department of External Affairs regarding whether or not there are cumulative effects on human beings from recurring exposures to atomic radiation?

Mr. Pearson: The Department of External Affairs has nothing to add to the statement made on this subject by the Minister of National Health and Welfare on April 4 (*Hansard*, pages 2652-54.)

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

ARMED FORCES—MOVING OF EFFECTS

Mr. Hamilton (York West):

What amounts were paid out by the Department of National Defence to moving contractors in 1954, in the province of Ontario, for moving the personal effects of officers and enlisted men of the three services: (a) from Ontario to points outside of Ontario; (b) from points outside of Ontario into Ontario?

Mr. Campney: Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to the hon. member for York West (Mr. Hamilton) and have pointed out to him that in view of the way in which statistics are kept in our department, I cannot answer his question as it is presently worded. If he will be satisfied with the names and the amounts paid to moving contractors in Ontario to whom we have made payments in the fiscal year 1954-55, this question could be so amended and made an order for return.

Mr. Speaker: Order for return.

CANSO CAUSEWAY—CONDITIONS IN STRAIT

Mr. Kirk (Antigonish-Guysborough):

1. During the past winter did the government conduct studies of the effect of the Canso causeway on ice conditions, tides and climate in the strait of Canso?

2. If so, what did such studies reveal?

DIESEL FUELS, RAILWAYS—DRAWBACK

Mr. Johnston (Bow River):

Do the railways get any assistance whatever from the federal government by way of subsidy, drawback, etc., on diesel fuels when used by the railways?

CIVIL DEFENCE COLLEGE

Mr. Dinsdale:

1. How many persons to date have taken courses at the civil defence college at Arnprior?

2. What courses are offered there, and how many persons have been trained in each course?

3. How are these trainees distributed by provinces and cities?

4. What has been the total cost of these courses?

5. How is this cost distributed between federal government, provincial governments, and municipalities?

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STORMS

SASKATCHEWAN—REQUEST FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the colossal damage sustained by the residents of the cities of Prince Albert and Saskatoon, as well as adjacent towns and rural areas, in the catastrophe which struck there within the last 48 hours, will the government give consideration to granting compensation and assistance to those people who have suffered serious damage and loss, as was done in the case of "Hurricane Hazel" and one or two other cases?

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I received notice from the hon. member for Yorkton (Mr. Castleden) of a similar question. I am glad of this opportunity to say what I am sure is the fact, that all hon. members of this house sympathize with those who have suffered storm and flood damage in recent days in the western provinces. Of course the hon. gentleman knows that the primary responsibility is local and provincial, but when there is damage of such extent that it can fairly be considered as a national disaster and representations are made by the provincial government to the federal government, those representations receive the most sympathetic consideration. There is at all times an endeavour to mete out the same treatment to Canadians in all parts of Canada, as has been done whenever in the past there have been things that amounted to national disasters.

We have not yet any accurate information as to the extent of the damage that has been caused by this unusual storm in that locality. I am sure the accurate information will be available shortly; and if the government of Saskatchewan feel that its extent does bring it into the category of what should be considered a national disaster, I am sure it will be brought to our notice and will receive the same sympathetic consideration that has been extended whenever there has been anything that amounted to a national disaster.

[Later:]

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, if I might ask a supplementary question of the Prime Minister, is it a fact that in the other cases where national disasters have been declared to exist, a request was made in each case by the provincial government? Second, if the loss is as estimated, namely in excess of \$50 million, is that not far above the extent of