

POST OFFICE

RECEIPT OF RETROACTIVE PAY BY EMPLOYEES

Mr. Norman A. Cafik (Ontario): I should like to address a question to the Minister without Portfolio in charge of the Post Office. Could the minister indicate to the House when all employees of the Post Office will receive their retroactive pay resulting from the recent postal settlement?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Côté (Minister without Portfolio): Mr. Speaker, although these cheques were to be sent out within 60 days, it seems that as early as the end of the first month they were being mailed out. Most of the employees have already received them.

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[English]

MANPOWER

UPGRADING OF ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS OF UNEMPLOYED—PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR TRAINING

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. As he is well aware, a goodly proportion of those who are unemployed and will be unemployed this winter do not have the necessary academic qualifications to qualify for vocational training. I should like to ask the minister whether his department is making a particular drive this winter to assist these unemployed people to achieve the necessary academic qualifications?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): A portion of the additional funds which were made available recently, as well as the main portion of the budget for training, is of course devoted to basic skill training with a view to dealing with this particular problem. Of course the object of the department is to deal as much as possible with all of the applicants in a balanced way to produce the best over-all result.

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): I have a supplementary question for the minister. Has he or will he undertake to enter into discussions with the provinces with a view to making available federal buildings, such as National Defence buildings, to handle the upgrading program in anticipation of the high unemployment this winter?

Mr. Lang: I have looked into the question of the problem which the provinces have in regard to facilities. Facilities of a temporary nature are not normally adequate for the more complicated forms of training. For the basic skill training which requires much simpler facilities, those seem to be available in adequate supply.

Mr. Stanfield: Would the minister make a statement on motions at an early date indicating how many persons it is proposed to upgrade in terms of basic academic skills during the coming winter?

Mr. Lang: A report can and will be made in the ordinary course after the completion of the year or the

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placing of the full budget of the department. Until that is done it is impossible to put an exact number upon it because within the available finances more persons can in fact be trained if basic training is used than are trained if more expensive, higher skill courses are called for.

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PENSIONS

OLD AGE SECURITY—TIME OF INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE INCREASE

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Prime Minister. Will the government's proposed legislation regarding old age pensions be introduced in time so that any increase provided therein can be included in the December pension cheques?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): The exact date will be known to the House when the legislation is introduced.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Will that be soon?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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FINANCE

SIZE OF INCREASE IN GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT—TAX RELIEF MEASURES TO STIMULATE ECONOMY

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): My question is for the Minister of Finance. In light of the estimate of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics that in real terms the gross national product may only rise 2.7 per cent for 1970, which would be the lowest in more than a decade, is the government going to announce tax relief measures soon in order to stimulate the economy?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): If the government were contemplating such a program of tax relief it would be announced in a budget in the House.

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POWER

PROPOSED FLOODING OF SKAGIT RIVER VALLEY—SUBMISSION OF BRIEF TO STATE OF WASHINGTON INQUIRY

Mr. Tom H. Goode (Burnaby-Richmond-Delta): My question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the news reports that Mr. John Biggs, head of the Washington state department of ecology, has announced that his department is going to hold hearings on the proposal by Seattle City Light Company to flood 6,000 acres of the Skagit valley in British Columbia, and in view of the fact that Mr. Biggs has made public his intention to ask the British Columbia government and the federal government to participate, will the minister assure the House that the government will submit a brief in opposition to any such flooding?

Mr. Baldwin: Order paper.