

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, May 15, 1956

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

EXPROPRIATION OF PART OF CAUGHNAWAGA
INDIAN RESERVE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. E. D. Fulton (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, in view of reports in yesterday's papers indicating that experienced real estate agents feel that the values being paid for properties on the Caughnawaga Indian reserve are well below their actual values, whether the minister is prepared to defer the expropriations or to reassess the prices which are being paid for land in that reserve.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I have attempted to stay within the rules of the house for the precise purpose of having a debate on this subject, a purpose which has been obstructed by hon. gentlemen opposite. For that reason perhaps I may be allowed two sentences to state what is the position. The first is that the expropriations have already taken place. The second is that no person can suffer any prejudice whatsoever by virtue of that fact. I have assured the house before and I give the assurance again that anyone who is dissatisfied with what he has been offered will have the opportunity of having his case heard by the courts. This work has to go on and the fact that it has to go on is apparent to everyone. In order to avoid every possible hardship we have made arrangements with the seaway authority whereby they will make advances, without prejudice to the final settlement, to those who are not satisfied with the offers being made.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

NEW WESTMINSTER—PROVISION OF RAIN GEAR
FOR LETTER CARRIERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. F. G. J. Hahn (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, further to a question which I asked the minister on April 12 respecting the need for rain gear at New Westminster, at which time he indicated that the gear had been sent, I wonder if he would inquire into this

matter. I have received word that it is raining to beat hell and they have no rain gear.

Hon. Hugues Lapointe (Postmaster General): I shall be very pleased to make inquiries.

INQUIRY FOR RETURN

TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Minister of Public Works. On May 2 this house passed a motion for the production of papers as follows:

For a copy of all correspondence exchanged between the government of Canada and the government of the province of British Columbia, or any ministers thereof, since January 1, 1956, with respect to the trans-Canada highway.

Can the minister inform the house if he is now able to table that correspondence?

Hon. Robert H. Winters (Minister of Public Works): Yes. I have just received a letter from the minister of highways of the government of British Columbia agreeing, with certain reservations regarding correspondence he would like to have considered as personal and privileged, to have me table the correspondence.

Mr. E. D. Fulton (Kamloops): May I ask the minister a supplementary question relating to the answer he just made to the hon. member for Kootenay West. Under what rule does the minister say that the permission of a provincial minister is necessary before correspondence can be tabled in the house? Is not the rule rather that as a matter of courtesy a provincial minister is informed of the intention to table and asked if he has any objection? If he does object, then the decision rests with the minister here as to whether or not he will table the correspondence. Is not the position that the minister cannot table an expurgated edition, that he has to decide whether or not he will table the correspondence?

Mr. Winters: I understand the rule is one of courtesy. I simply acquainted the house with the information that was imparted to me by the minister of highways of British Columbia in a letter I received today. I have not yet tabled the correspondence, and I am in the process of giving consideration to that point now.