

when will aboriginal people be recruited in greater numbers by the Public Service.

Hon. Herb Gray (President of the Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, I understand that as yet there has been no staffing action taken to recruit candidates to the positions in question. But I am confident that those doing the staffing will be keeping in line with our desire to increase participation of indigenous people in the federal Public Service and involve native persons in the staffing process for positions in which they require their input. The kind of concern raised by my hon. friend is very much the concern of the Government, and I am optimistic that we will be able to make a very good response in the area in question.

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RAILWAYS

CROWSNEST PASS RATE—BENEFIT FOR RAILWAYS UNDER PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Will the proposed Bill that the Minister is bringing in give the total Crow benefit to the railways?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I alluded yesterday and in days before to the fact that the Government was reviewing the question of the method of payment. My hon. friend remembers that in my statement of February 1 I indicated a 50/50 distribution, 50 per cent to the railways and 50 per cent to the producers. This is being reviewed now and I should be in a position to announce the result of the Government's re-examination in a very few days.

EFFECT OF INCREASED RATES ON FARMERS

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): Madam Speaker, if the total Crow benefit is given to the railways and they have the authority to raise the rates for all agricultural products, where would the farmers secure the necessary money to pay these vastly increased rates? I would suggest that might be taken into consideration.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I am not sure if I catch the whole purport of the question, I can only say that when the Bill is introduced it will be fully debated on second reading, it will go to committee, and then third reading. We will do an exhaustive job of answering all the questions which have been raised. Obviously what has happened, and I have said it quite bluntly, is that a number of people take exception to the mode of payment to the producers. We will analyse that, we will call in psychoanalysts, economists, and sociologists to explain that particular reaction.

Oral Questions

NATIONAL DEFENCE

NEED PROGRAM—NON-HIRING OF FORMER CASUAL EMPLOYEES

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence and relates to a question by the Hon. Member for Victoria and the answer from the Hon. Minister a few days ago. It had to do with the replacement of employees of the Department of National Defence, this time particularly at Uplands, with people hired under the NEED Program. The Hon. Minister will recall that he said:

The employees hired by the NEED Program will be over and above the normal term employees that we have.

● (1200)

Is the hon. gentleman aware that at Canadian Forces Base Uplands the casual employees in the trades have not been taken back, and that the stated reason they have not been taken back is because the Department is hiring under the NEED Program? Today I ask the Minister if he would investigate that matter, because there is a problem out there to which I would ask him to devote his personal attention.

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, I understand the concern of the hon. gentleman and, if it were true, if it were the case, I would be concerned myself.

Mr. Crosby: Come on. It is the case.

Mr. Lamontagne: The report I have received in this case is that it is not true.

Mr. Nielsen: It is the case.

Mr. Lamontagne: The employees hired through NEED do not supersede the ones whom we have had under casual employment.

Some Hon. Members: That's not so.

Mr. Lamontagne: The Hon. Member knows very well that every year we have so many person-years given for temporary employment.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): How many are there for Esquimalt?

Mr. Crosby: How many are there for Halifax?

Mr. Lamontagne: The regulators are set by the Treasury Board with regard to how many we may hire on term. These are set every year. At one point, on March 31, we will have to lay term employees off until we can get a new allocation of person-years from Treasury Board. However, I can assure the hon. gentleman that I will look into the facts of the case he is presenting to me. I will give the Hon. Member a written answer, which I am sure would satisfy him.