

Acquisition of E.B. Eddy Company Land

ment of an agreement that meets our objectives. Throughout the discussions and negotiations one point was made clear by the government again and again, that no transaction with Eddys would be countenanced which would result in the lay-off of employees. I am particularly happy to say that in this agreement we have fully met this commitment and I pay tribute and give thanks to the officers of the company and the unions.

These arrangements will allow us to continue to work out together an industrial relocation that is essential to the building of a capital of which all Canadians can be proud.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, we have learned with a great deal of pleasure the news that some changes are to be made at the Eddy plant across the river from Parliament Hill. While great piles of logs and sulphur may have been signs of progress 75 and even 50 years ago, they have more recently become an eyesore to people on Parliament Hill and many others. Furthermore, during recent years the amount of pollutants which has been dumped into the river has been in inversed ratio to the damage done. In other words, the increasing development of the Ottawa River Valley has added to the pollution problem. Even though from time to time there have been cutbacks in the effluent from the Eddy plant, a smaller amount of effluent does more damage now than was once the case. It is therefore good news that the more unsightly parts of the plant will be removed and that most of the pollutants will be eliminated. We look forward to completion of the ten-year plan announced in the statement just read under which the area across from Parliament Hill will become well-landscaped parkland.

We must accept the statement made today that proper and acceptable arrangements have been made for employees. We hope that no problems will develop in this regard. There will undoubtedly be relocation problems for a number of persons. The statement mentioned early retirement for those who are shortly to retire. I trust that these arrangements will be carried out in the spirit indicated in the statement.

We should not be complacent and think that this action will clean up the Ottawa River. It will help, but there is still a mighty task to be undertaken not only because of the many years of effluent discharge from the operation of the Eddy plant and other damage to the river bed but also because of the many years of logging and the many other sources of pollution that have arisen.

I conclude by urging the government to press ahead with joint federal-provincial efforts to clean up the whole Ottawa River Valley. This subject has been raised many times in the House, as well as the situation with regard to the Eddy plant. Nevertheless I do not want to take away from the fact that this move is very satisfying and must be for all members on the Hill.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues and myself I am pleased to congratulate the minister, the unions, the company and the National Capital Commission on this agreement. One of my col-

[Mr. Basford.]

leagues says that he hopes all this means that the White Swan sign will come down. Another suggests it be retained because it is so colourful. I must say that when I read this announcement by the minister and looked at the amount of money E. B. Eddy would get I recalled a saying which was used at the time of the late and great R. B. Bennett in connection with E. B. Eddy: There is a tide in the time of men which, taken at the "Eddy", leads on to fortune.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis: My first point is that the minister should have informed us on what basis the \$29,500,000 is to be paid to Eddy. It is my understanding that several years ago discussions took place on this subject and Eddy was to get \$30 million for the entire property. We are now paying almost \$30 million for a little more than half of that property. I think the country is entitled to know whether there are arrangements for other parts of the Eddy property which the government might take over later, what is likely to be the final cost of this important and great improvement, and whether or not the company is getting a little more than it ought to, after the years in which it has exploited the resources and polluted the air and water around Canada's capital. I hope the minister will give us further information on that score.

I also hope the undertaking not to lay off employees will be carefully watched to see that it is observed. It is my understanding that there was a meeting this morning between the union leaders and the National Capital Commission. I am glad to note the minister's determination that the undertaking shall be observed, and I hope it will be. We are now rid of the pollution outside parliament. Perhaps we should go some steps further and rid ourselves of any that there might be inside.

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[Translation]

JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION

STATEMENT BY SOLICITOR GENERAL ON RELEASE OF
YVES GEOFFROY FROM PENITENTIARY

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, although considerable public interest has been shown in the escape from custody of Yves Geoffroy during a leave of absence from December 24 to December 26, 1971, this is the first opportunity to inform the hon. members of the circumstances leading to the granting of the leave of absence to this particular inmate for the purpose of marriage.

The temporary absence program has been in operation in Canadian penitentiaries for the last 4 years even though provision had been in the Penitentiary Act since 1961. It is an earned privilege which is granted by the Commissioner of Penitentiaries for periods exceeding three days and by the director of an institution for periods of three days or less.

There is little data to carry out a full evaluation of the temporary leave program over a long term. It will be some years before it will be possible to make any conclusions about its real effect on recidivism. Recent statistics encourage optimism about the program. Between Septem-