

inquiry that was established under the auspices of the Act. It is a unanimous report. It brings forth a specific recommendation and it should be given serious consideration. But what we really are expecting here is a full, comprehensive debate on the issue.

COMMITTEE EXAMINATION

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has referred the report to the Transport Committee. If the Minister expects the Transport Committee to make a judgment on the recommendations in this report, will he ensure that the Transport Committee is provided with all of the studies that were carried out in relation to that recommendation? Will he provide for further study into the detrimental effects of the recommendations?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, that will certainly depend upon the decision of the committee about what information they want to seek. In addition to the valuable input of the standing committee, I will be asking the members of the Hall Committee to make themselves available to any group, Members of Parliament, or whoever may want to consult them to get a full briefing, so that there is a clear understanding of the background and recommendations that have been advanced—I might repeat, advanced in a unanimous manner.

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FORESTRY

BUDWORM INFESTATION IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Forestry. It concerns the budworm infestation which is ravaging millions of acres of our forest stands in northern Ontario. It is approaching the proportion of a national disaster for many communities in northern Ontario.

So far, the Ontario Conservative Government is refusing to make a commitment to save the forests of northern Ontario from this infestation, and establish a proper control program. Can the Minister, who, I assume, is in daily contact with his provincial counterpart, explain why no action is being taken to control this infestation which threatens the very existence of hundreds of communities and thousands of jobs in northern Ontario?

Hon. Gerald S. Merrithew (Minister of State (Forestry)): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the Hon. Member is aware that the whole question of spraying and protection of the forests is a matter of provincial concern. They have undertaken in no uncertain terms to deal with that on a public basis. They have had tours and displays, and meetings with the public, in order to deal with that particular issue.

Oral Questions

The Minister has stated publicly that the Government will be dealing with that policy and will put it before the public within the next few weeks.

Mr. Foster: Surely the Minister cannot wash his hands of this matter as easily as that. He was a provincial Minister.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER INTERVENE

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, surely the Minister knows that the time is running out for a decision to be made on this matter. There must be a 30-day lead time for environmental considerations. Surely the Minister would not want to be party to some kind of secret deal in which no decision is made by the Ontario Government.

Will the Minister make a commitment to the House right now, and to the people of northern Ontario, to phone Premier Frank Miller this afternoon and point out the gravity of this matter to him, and urge him to make a commitment today that he will bring in a proper program to control this infestation?

Hon. Gerald S. Merrithew (Minister of State (Forestry)): Mr. Speaker, it is not necessary for me to call the Premier of Ontario on a matter like this. He is certainly aware of the importance of forestry, and he is aware of the importance of spraying in that operation. The Premier and the Minister will make that decision in due course.

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WESTERN GRAIN TRANSPORTATION ACT

HALL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. When the Justice Hall Committee process was set in place some time ago, one of the basic economic assumptions was that a change in our Canadian farm policy that would be assisted by changes to the Crow rate would permit beef and pork producers to export products into the United States, Japan, and Korea. This assumption was disputed at the time by some of the leading meat packing industries spokesmen, including Mr. Childs and Mr. Kaumeyer. Since then we have seen the United States implement a tariff of 5.3 cents per pound on hogs, on the assumption that we are subsidizing hogs with the stabilization program.

Given that the assumptions have changed, will the Minister reject both the assumptions and the recommendations from that report and start over from square one?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, first I would remind all Hon. Members that this was a government inquiry that was established under Part I of the Inquiries Act. There were two very important criteria included in the terms of reference which I believe should bear some consideration. One was that the method of payment should be