

[English]

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman, I am sure knows that the prerogative for setting the guidelines for the use of aircraft by Members of Parliament, DND aircraft that is, is a prerogative of the Minister of National Defence. Those guidelines are completed and hopefully will be tabled before we break.

With respect to the guidelines concerning the use of administrative aircraft by Ministers and others entitled, such as the Governor General and senior officials and so on, they are almost complete. The Hon. Member knows that that is a Prime Ministerial prerogative. They should be ready for tabling, if not before the break, shortly thereafter.

[Translation]

MINISTER'S TRAVEL EXPENSES—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Every time we put an embarrassing question to the Government, the Minister or Prime Minister fails to answer the question. The Prime Minister did this yesterday, and the Deputy Prime Minister, unless he misunderstood my question, certainly did not answer the question I put to him.

Is the Deputy Prime Minister prepared to admit that a number of his colleagues have a tendency towards undue expenditure of public funds, especially the former Minister of Communications, the Minister of National Health and Welfare and now the Minister of State (Immigration), whose behaviour in this respect is well known? Is the Deputy Prime Minister going to ask these Ministers who mix personal travel and pleasure trips with their official business, to restore the funds in question to the public purse?

[English]

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): I do not at all accept that rather enlarged preamble of the Member, Mr. Speaker. He should certainly be the last one to be speaking as a member of a former Government that had three Cabinet Ministers arrive on three separate Government aircraft in the town of his seatmate in one day.

An Hon. Member: Within an hour.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: I think that is right, I think within an hour of each other. I can assure the Hon. Member though, that travel, in terms of the number of trips by members of this Government as compared with the last, of which he was a member, is down 34 per cent. The number of hours flown on aircraft used by members of this Government as compared with the last Government over the past year is down 27 per cent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

NATIONAL PARKS

PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF SOUTH MORESBY NATIONAL PARK

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Hon. Minister of the Environment. He will know that all three Parties in this House support national park status for South Moresby, that the B.C. Government supports it, and there is a national consensus that that area become a national park. Has the Minister any plans to take any action or make any proposals that might head off what is a totally unnecessary confrontation, given the fact that everyone agrees some day that area should be a national park, and soon?

An Hon. Member: Does Jim Fulton agree?

Mr. Fulton: Yes.

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is right in saying that there is a broadly based consensus in favour of the establishment of a national park in South Moresby. The question, however, is what part of South Moresby should be so designated, whether it should be the entire island or something less. I will say this though. The federal Government is totally committed to the principle of the establishment of a national park covering whatever territory in South Moresby. The prior decision has to be made by the Government of British Columbia and the people in that province because it is B.C. Crown land.

Having said that, I can tell the Hon. Member that the federal Government is prepared to do everything possible, including the creative use of public funds to bring about a national park, and I seek the co-operation of the Hon. Member and his Party in that regard.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Good.

CREATIVE USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, could the Minister elaborate for us what he means by the creative use of public funds, and give us an idea of what he has in mind to avoid confrontation so that we could have the opportunity of supporting a more concrete proposal?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, there are various legitimate interests to be accommodated in this case, certainly those of the Haida Indians, the logging company, Western Forest Products Limited, and its employees.

I am led to believe that there is some openness, if not a commitment, on the part of the company in question at least to consider the possibility of the federal Government and the Government of British Columbia linking arms to buy out some of the timber rights, the legitimate three licences. I would think that the employees themselves, in other words, those who