

Adjournment Debate

ment jobs. Now we find out after my questioning in the House that it will be 100 jobs for 10 weeks. The details of the press release did not indicate in any way how much the Government of Canada was prepared to allot to the 1B colliery. It did not make any mention of the number of jobs or the duration of those jobs.

I say this to the Parliamentary Secretary so that he will understand that economic conditions in that part of Canada are pretty devastating. It has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the country. Now that the main industry in that community has been put on the back burner, with 1,200 men unemployed, the situation is a very serious one. I wish to remind the House that they do not want 10-week jobs; they want permanent ones. I believe there is a responsibility on the part of the Government to provide the necessary moneys.

In putting my questions and concerns to the Parliamentary Secretary, I wish to remind him that there is a strategy for coal development at the Cape Breton Development Corporation. If the 1B colliery as submitted by the United Mine Workers of America is not a feasible operation, meaning that it is not safe to proceed with that colliery, they ought to proceed with the new Number 26 colliery. Studies are already in place, consultants have been retained, and that information is readily available. A new Number 26 colliery would not come into place for two, three or perhaps four years.

What about the interim? As I have said in the House, interim measures ought to be put in place forthwith. They ought to have a pre-retirement plan for miners who are 55 years of age or over. It should be something similar to that contained in the Labour Adjustment Program. I remind the Parliamentary Secretary that when the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) campaigned in August, he said that the coal and steel industries in Cape Breton were the soul of Cape Breton. He also said that a Tory Government, under his jurisdiction, would see the two industries through thick and through thin.

● (1805)

The situation is crucial, Mr. Speaker. We need a firm commitment for new coal developments in the Town of Glace Bay. We need interim measures and long-lasting measures as well. We need a pre-retirement plan for the coal miners. In addition to the pre-retirement plan, the Government of Canada, in co-operation with the Government of Nova Scotia, ought to conclude a subsidiary agreement for all of Cape Breton in order to put those miners and other unemployed individuals to work. Many programs dealing with infrastructure like water and sewer could be tackled as an interim measure.

I suggest very strongly that the Government of Canada must provide the leadership. It cannot sweep this one under the carpet. It has jurisdiction and responsibility for the Cape Breton Development Corporation. It must provide the money and it must provide it forthwith.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Monique Tardif (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, with your leave, I would like to take this opportunity, that of my first reply as Parliamentary Secretary, to congratulate you on your appointment and also to thank the Right Hon. Prime Minister for allowing me to accede to this position. I also wish to give all Members of this House the assurance that I shall answer their questions to the best of my ability.

The questions asked by the Hon. Member actually go far beyond the issue raised by the fire in the mine in Cape Breton.

[*English*]

On April 5, 1984, Number 26 colliery was lost by fire. The fire came from within the mine and one man, Mr. Ronald MacDonald, lost his life. We are all well aware of that. The colliery employed 1,200 employees and was the principal industry within the Town of Glace Bay. It was a sad day for all concerned; for the employees, the town and the corporation. The community's loss and the loss to the employees is so obvious it need not be stated. However, I would like to point out to the Hon. Member that the corporation has lost as well. It lost its major source of metallurgical coal and millions of dollars worth of machinery, equipment and tools. This loss is in the neighbourhood of \$25 million.

I would also like to remind the Hon. Member that the effects of the fire have not gone unnoticed. The corporation made available \$150,000 to clean up the roadway leading to the top of Number 7 deep. Number 7 deep leads down to 1B colliery which was closed by the predecessor company on June 30, 1955. Our Government has made available \$1.7 million for the sealing of Number 26 colliery and the arching of the same roadway so as to permit safe passage. The closing of Number 26 colliery at the same time is also a required safety measure.

Subject to the physical constraints of the area, it is intended that at least 140 employees will be recalled for a 10-week period to arch the roadway. In the interim, the feasibility study on the reopening of 1B colliery is under active consideration. The decision to reopen 1B must take into consideration not only the current circumstances in Glace Bay but, as well, the market for such coal, the cost of mining, the capital cost of reopening the mine and the return on the capital invested. There is no doubt that this study requires time. However, it is the intention of the acting president to inform the Minister of the results of the study sometime within the next month. The latest news is that, as of today, 130 persons have been recalled to work on the roadways leading to 1B colliery.

● (1810)

NATIONAL REVENUE—DISCONTINUANCE OF ADVANCE TAX RULINGS IN CASE OF LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS. (B) EFFECT ON ALGOMA STEEL

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question of November 9 was addressed to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson). I asked him why the Government was discontinuing the practice of advance rulings by the Department of National Revenue with respect to the tax implications of joint ventures