

with a storehouse of energy in all its forms. Let us put this to work together.

I would like to take this opportunity to advise the House that in my capacity as Minister of State for Mines I recently released a discussion paper to industry, labour and the provinces which outlines and develops the state of the mining industry in Canada. It raises the questions which must be faced in order to develop the potential that our natural resources have always had. With 20 per cent of our foreign exchange and 4 per cent of our Gross National Product, the mining sector represents one of Canada's strong resource-based industries.

I am pleased that we are already getting feedback from the provinces, from the industry and from labour representatives on how this industry can be structured and reinforced for the future. Our consultation process in the mining sector includes contacts with each of the Mines Ministers. It will be followed up with a second round of review here in Ottawa, shortly after the Budget. We will also be holding a Minerals Outlook Conference. This year's theme is structural change and economic renewal. For the first time this is a joint effort with the Mining Association of Canada. After the Minerals Outlook Conference, I intend to face a number of issues of concern arising from our consultations, to follow up the many private meetings that I have already held with the industry.

● (1750)

The Canadian mining industry needs investment. I think the slow nature of the world market for minerals plus the uncertainties of the regime and the policies of the previous Government have resulted in uncertainty in the mining sector. I am happy to advise the House that in those conversations across the country I have found a sense of a positive future for the mining industry. I am proud to be part of this Government to assist in that development.

As a first step we wish to foster the kind of investment climate that we so badly need. One of the first acts of this Government was to change the Foreign Review Agency and to create Investment Canada.

Mr. Boudria: Sell out Canada.

Mr. Layton: We will continue to work toward making Canada a place where investment once more is welcome.

Because it is a first occasion for me as a Member to speak in this House, I thought I might express a special appreciation to all of those in my home, the lakeshore of Montreal, specifically in the riding of Lachine, for giving me the opportunity to serve in this Parliament.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Layton: I know I will be expressing the feelings of everyone ever elected to Parliament when I say that I have a sense of responsibility and, to a certain degree, a sense of awe that I am here as a trustee in this place. I assure my constituents, I assure Members and I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that with those experiences I have had in my life, I will be happy to

work in this Parliament toward making Canada a place for business, a place for oil accords, and a place for the mining industry.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the Minister's comments about consultation on his discussion paper. I would like to report briefly on a tour I took two weeks ago in northwestern Ontario. It was called past, present and future of one-industry mining communities. We started in Atikokan, a community that lost its main employer, an iron ore mine about five or six years ago. We went up to the Red Lake Ear Falls area which, as the Minister is aware, is undergoing the shut-down of one of its major employers, the Griffith Mine. We went on to Marathon to take a look at how that community and the community of Manitowadge are dealing with the boom cycle of Hemlo. We found that as a society we have not yet learned to put in place the mechanisms that we need to protect those communities for the day when their resources, whether of the mineral type, the wood fibre type or even the fishing type run out. I invite the Minister to travel that route with me sometime during his process of consultation, to hear first hand from the men of Atikokan in the age group of 55 to 60 to 62 who cannot get a job in a community that has 40 per cent unemployment. I would like him to come to Ear Falls to talk to the families who are worried about the equity they have built up in their homes and who want to stay there. These people do not want to be relocated. Then I would like the Minister to come to Hemlo to see what we could do to protect that community for a time 10 or 20 years down the road when its resources run out. I would be very pleased if the Minister would consider making the tour with me.

Mr. Layton: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to respond to the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan (Mr. Angus). The conditions he described relating to certain mining communities, particularly across the remote North of Canada are serious. There are two cycles at work, as the Hon. Member knows. The mining cycle is very real. Ore is not an infinite source. Coupled with this is the economic cycle which is often completely beyond the control of the industry of which it is a part. It is often beyond the control even of our own Canadian authorities.

I acknowledge and welcome the opportunity to visit such communities with him. I have already had the privilege of visiting in the northern part of Ontario. I have been to Timmins, and to Kirkland Lake. I know there are serious problems also in the Eastern Townships of Quebec. We are addressing them as quickly and as effectively as we can. I know the area on the north shore of Quebec and what has happened to the iron ore industry there. I know that also is a particular concern. These communities, towns, their people and their families are all affected. Together with the other Departments of Governments that have a responsibility in these economic cycles, it is my hope we will develop a policy