

uncertainty causes great worry to mining producers and, particularly, to the miners of northwestern Quebec, an important mining region.

The two statements will greatly disturb the mine workers in eastern Canada who are the most affected.

• (11:40 a.m.)

[English]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

GRAIN

WHEAT—LONG-RANGE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I had a question to pose to the Minister without Portfolio who made a statement today, and in this connection I should like to raise a question of privilege in order to call Your Honour's attention to a criticism I should like to make. The minister made a statement which posed more questions than it gave answers, and I think it is shameful that the minister and the Minister of Agriculture have run out of the House before exposing themselves to proper questioning.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Baldwin: I direct my question to the Prime Minister. In light of the urgency posed by the special report of the Economic Council of Canada, and having in mind the valid criticism of the minister's statement voiced today, is it the intention of the government of Canada to propose, in addition to the inadequate measures announced today, some long-range solutions to the problems facing our agricultural producers in western Canada?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the minister will be back shortly. Perhaps he has played the usual opposition trick of running out to get to the television cameras before hon. gentlemen opposite do.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: Listen to the old shrugger. Come on, get those arms working.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, I think the Prime Minister has imputed motives to members on this side.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Woolliams: It seems to me the Prime Minister is taking a very childish approach to the serious problems that are confronting western Canada.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will recognize the hon. member in a moment. I understand the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands has a supplementary.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): No, Mr. Speaker, I was not rising on a supplementary.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry. Then I recognize the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. In view of the Prime Minister's childish approach I would ask Your Honour to rule whether or not it is proper that the Prime Minister should come into this House and bring his toys with him.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I do not think we should get involved in this situation too deeply. This type of point of order or question of privilege has been raised before, and I have made rulings in the past which would indicate that the point raised by the hon. member is well taken.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The point has obviously been well taken. I recognize the right hon. member for Prince Albert.

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

INFLATION—IMPOSITION OF POSTPONED RAILWAY FREIGHT RATE INCREASE

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I would direct my question to the Prime Minister. Having regard to the way in which he spoke on February 18, when he said prices were going to be kept reasonable and restrained—and he particularly mentioned freight rates—and since both the CNR and the CPR have given notice that on the first day of March they intend to raise their rates on livestock and a range of other commodities, which again will strike a further blow against agriculture, will the Prime Minister say what representations were made to the CNR and the CPR? In particular, in view of the fact that the CNR is a government-owned railway, what is going to be done to prevent this increase taking place?