

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, what I did when I was at the bar was study a statute to see if it should be changed. That is what I am arguing now. It seems to me that that is the position of the right hon. gentleman, in saying that the statute has dangerous implications. If that is so, surely the argument should be made to those who passed the statute and have the power to amend it.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

LAY-OFFS IN NICKEL INDUSTRY—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ALLEVIATE

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the fact that an Ontario select committee reported yesterday and made recommendations to save thousands of jobs in the nickel industry through a combination of a 30-day stockpiling of nickel, 30 days of job-sharing, and a retirement plan, that this proposal was supported by a majority of the committee, including all the provincial Liberals on the committee, and that this is the only positive proposal which has been put forward by either the federal government or the provincial government to save these thousands of jobs, can the minister tell this House if the government will at long last take positive steps to protect these jobs and the communities involved by supporting the proposals of the Ontario select committee?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I very much want to see those proposals. I have not yet received them. We have asked the Ontario government to send them to us, but they have not yet arrived. I believe they will be in our possession later this afternoon. When we receive them, we will take a very good look at them.

Mr. Rodriguez: In view of the fact that the provincial select committee has at last come forward with a plan which will protect the employment of over 3,000 miners, and the communities in which they live, for at least 60 days, that the federal Liberal government has put forward absolutely no plans to protect the jobs of these workers, and that what is proposed by this select committee is that an interest-free loan be given to Falconbridge and Inco so they can stockpile for one month, can the minister tell the House if he is prepared to enter into negotiations with the provincial government and to put up money to save the jobs of miners in the Sudbury basin and at Thompson, Manitoba?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that the federal government has responded on a number of occasions, suggesting profitable avenues for the company and the union to pursue. Without accepting the hon. member's preamble, I go back to my earlier answer and say that I am prepared to consider what the select committee has proposed. However, I

Oral Questions

have not yet seen what has been proposed and until I do later this day I can add nothing more.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, the lay-offs are to take place on Monday: on Monday, 3,000 workers in Sudbury will be hitting the bricks. In view of the fact that the proposal which was made yesterday must go into effect as quickly as possible if we are to avoid the lay-offs, can the minister tell the House if he is prepared to go to his office after the question period, get on the telephone or telex and get the proposals from the Ontario government so that a decision can be made as quickly as possible? Can the minister tell the House that?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Moncton.

Mr. Rodriguez: Come on; get up and answer the question. Don't sit there like a dummy; get up.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Moncton.

Mr. Jones: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Rodriguez: Answer the question. You don't care about workers. You have a nice fat job, haven't you?

Mr. Jones: Order, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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● (1442)

POST OFFICE

HOUSE TO HOUSE MAIL DELIVERY SERVICE—GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. Leonard C. Jones (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Postmaster General, to whom I would like to extend my personal congratulations, having been associated with him as a colleague in the municipal field for many years. Will the minister advise this House exactly when, and on what basis, the restraints placed on house to house mail delivery service will be lifted? Does the minister intend to discontinue house to house mail delivery service altogether, or is he going to follow the quid pro quo system which was followed in the Toronto area recently, as reported in the *Toronto Globe and Mail* on Monday.

[Translation]

Hon. J.-Gilles Lamontagne (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, I must say that we are not at all planning to discontinue house to house mail delivery service. Let us say that we are looking just now into ways we could improve this delivery service in urban areas which have developed very rapidly.

[English]

Mr. Jones: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister why the alleged restraints placed on house to house mail delivery were instituted in the Scarborough area, in the