

*Oral Questions*

from the Government. However, no such request has been made of it. There are ramifications which affect many sectors of our society and economy, and if and when the Government takes a decision in this regard it will certainly be preceded by extensive consultations with all interested parties.

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**RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT****ALTERNATIVE ENERGY—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton-The Sydneys):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Science and Technology on a subject already mentioned this morning. The Minister says that research and development into renewable energy can be carried by the private sector, but he knows very well that the private sector dealing with renewable energy is very small and very weak. In fact the work abandoned by this Government had been carried on for ten years. Is the Minister saying that there is no place in this country's future for renewable energy?

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, I thought I made it clear a moment ago that in fact this Government remains committed to continuing work and research on alternative energy, and the necessary research to support that enterprise. As the Member pointed out, this work has progressed for some ten years largely with federal Government support in the form of major subsidies. If there is an export potential for solar energy technology, for example, it is high time that industry began to demonstrate its capacity to market products which will sell in the external market. We intend to support such initiatives through various other government programs.

**RENEWABLE ENERGY**

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton-The Sydneys):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister said the Government supports alternate energy; he has not said the Government supports renewable energy. What is the position of the Progressive Conservative Government now, a Government that promised during the election campaign that it would support all industrial projects which would reduce our country's dependency on crude oil?

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, estimates and information sought from my own officials at the National Research Council and others in government have indicated that for the foreseeable future our hydro-carbon, hydro-electric and nuclear resources will adequately provide for Canada's energy requirements. In terms of the potential to export renewable energy technology, this Government will continue to support research and development and product development initiatives geared to bringing that type of return back home to the Canadian economy.

**MINES AND MINING****ANNOUNCED CLOSING OF STELCO MINE AT RED LAKE, ONT.**

**Mr. John Parry (Kenora-Rainy River):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Mines. Stelco Incorporated announced yesterday that its plans to close its Griffith Iron Ore Mine located between Ear Falls and Red Lake. The closing of this mine will mean the direct loss of 283 jobs, almost one quarter of the area's work force. It will be devastating for the area. Will the Minister act to influence Stelco to keep this mine open, or, in the alternative, to locate another operator? If unsuccessful in keeping the mine open, will he commit himself to working to ensure a more reasonable timetable for its closure?

**Hon. Bob Layton (Minister of State (Mines)):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon. Member for bringing this matter to the attention of the House and providing me, as a new Member of the House of Commons, with an opportunity to address the Commons. The issue of the closing of the Griffith Mine in Red Lake is well known to us. We are monitoring developments and the work being done with the provincial Government as well, but I can assure the Hon. Member, and the community and workers of the Red Lake area affected by the announcement, that our Government stands ready to assist them to the fullest possible extent with existing programs. These will provide for mobility assistance, retraining, helping the workers to find other jobs, and exploring whatever economic options are available to the community.

**ASSISTANCE TO MINERS**

**Mr. John Parry (Kenora-Rainy River):** Mr. Speaker, the answer was well read, and my supplementary question should properly be directed to the Minister of Employment. However, in her absence I direct it to the Minister of Mines.

If in fact the mine does close, will the Government ensure that assistance similar to that given to the mines recently closed in Quebec will be given to this area?

**Hon. Bob Layton (Minister of State (Mines)):** Without question, Mr. Speaker!

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**INDUSTRY****FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY—MINISTER'S POSITION**

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. Will it be the policy of the Government of Canada and of his Department to ignore the needs of the shoe industry and the question of shoe imports until his shares are sold in the bankrupt shoe company?