

evidence that the Hon. Member is suggesting, to show that the Corporation is violating the law. I am looking at the matter further.

If the objectives which have been given to the Corporation are not followed, it will be brought to the attention of the board of directors who will make sure that the Corporation follows the legislation.

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DISASTERS

FATAL ACCIDENT AT SYDNEY STEEL MILL

Mr. Brian Mulroney (Leader of the Opposition) Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister. I am sure that all Members of the House were shocked and saddened as a result of the tragic accident that occurred at Sydney Steel yesterday, which claimed three lives and injured two other people. I am sure that all Members of the House will join me in conveying our genuine condolences to all members of the families affected.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: In the absence of the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion, could the Acting Prime Minister tell the House whether he has any further details in regard to this tragedy? What plans has the Government to ensure that the plant is rendered operational as quickly as possible, notwithstanding the accident, inasmuch as it plays such a vital role in the economy of Nova Scotia, and of Cape Breton in particular?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the Hon. Leader of the Opposition in extending my condolences to the families. The Minister is not in the House today because he is in Washington on ministerial business. I am sure the corporation responsible will do the utmost to make sure that this company is back in operation as quickly as possible. This is very vital to the economy of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. There have already been communications by the members for this area with the Government to make sure that everything is done as quickly as possible to ensure that work resumes speedily.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO RESTART PLANT

Mr. Brian Mulroney (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, an extended break for Parliament is being contemplated. Could I have the assurance of the Acting Prime Minister that, prior to our departure for Christmas, the Government will lay before the House an assurance of substance to the people of Cape Breton that every conceivable effort will be made to ensure that the plant is re-energized and back on stream as quickly as possible, with an indication of how it would propose to accomplish this?

Oral Questions

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): I am informed that it is a provincial Crown corporation which operates the mill. The federal Government has always been very keen to help in these situations. Our record in the past has guaranteed that everything possible will be done. Basically it is the responsibility of a provincial Crown corporation. If they get in touch with the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, we will do everything we can to help them.

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT

Mr. Brian Mulroney (Leader of the Opposition): I would like the Acting Prime Minister to assure the House Mr. Speaker, that is precisely my point, that initiatives will be taken by the federal Government of Canada, in communication with the Government of Nova Scotia, to ensure that the highest priority is given, prior to the Christmas break, to laying out a commitment to the people of Cape Breton that progress will be made as quickly as humanly possible.

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): I am sure that the Government of Nova Scotia will take the necessary steps. It is their responsibility. I am sure that Premier Buchanan will be in touch with our Government if he feels that he needs our assistance in the circumstances. We will be willing to help, as I have already said.

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CROWN CORPORATIONS

URANIUM CARTEL PROSECUTION—REQUEST THAT CROWN IMMUNITY BE WAIVED

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. It is about the uranium cartel prosecution. The Government has the ability to waive the defence of Crown immunity in this particular instance.

Executive privilege was used as a defence by President Nixon of the United States until public opinion determined that that should be reversed. He, in fact, suffered the consequences for that decision. Donald Macdonald was the Minister of Energy at the time, sole shareholder of Eldorado Nuclear and of Uranium Canada. Senator Jack Austin is now the Minister of State for Social Development responsible for Crown corporations. They travelled the world to set up this club.

● (1140)

Will the Minister not now consider that it would be appropriate to waive that defence of Crown immunity, in order that the full facts can come forward and that the Government agencies can be subject to prosecution like any other citizen?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, whatever reason there might have been to that claim some time ago I think it no longer exists in the light of the decision