

We will be dealing with the industry as a whole. I will be seeking the advice and suggestions of the industry on how best to deal with this very difficult situation.

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MANPOWER

REASON FOR SUSPENSION OF PUBLICATION OF LAY-OFF STATISTICS

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, may I put a supplementary question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration who apparently is another minister not needed in Montreal today. Is the minister aware that the monthly report with respect to lay-offs reported by Canada Manpower Centres has been suspended as of this month? I ask this in view of the lay-off situation we are dealing with. If he is aware that this report has been suspended, could he indicate to the House why this time has been chosen to suspend this monthly report bearing in mind that it reflected 61,000 lay-offs so far this year up to the last report which was in October?

● (1427)

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, let me say first of all that I was in Montreal and we received a series of excellent briefings from both management and labour, and other individuals. It was a very worthwhile operation. I thought it was appropriate that I return today. Some of the ministers are still there and participating in very serious government business.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cullen: I don't know why the hon. member persists in the cheap kind of shot that he takes.

Mr. Alexander: Answer the question.

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I would invite the hon. member for York-Simcoe to do a little studying to check what has been done on behalf of the miners in that particular region, as well as the services we have made available. At the same time we recognize the primacy of the union. We do not want to usurp their particular role. We met with the union and management and they said they wanted to have some time to see if they could work it out themselves as part of collective bargaining or part of an agreement. They are endeavouring to work it out, and they do not want us to move in to undermine the role the union has to play. Once we have the green light in that particular region we are prepared to move in and do that which is necessary to help those who are laid off.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the minister of unemployment and immigration. The question relates to the report about which I asked the minister in my first supplementary. The report for November with respect to lay-offs in Canada has not been published. We understand it has not been published under the direction of a director within

Oral Questions

the minister's department. Would he indicate why that report is not being published, bearing in mind that it is extremely pertinent that the monthly lay-off situation in Canada be known not only to every member here, but to the Canadian public, so that we can judge the government's activities in trying to relieve this jobless situation in the nation. In other words, why is it not forthcoming? It looks pretty fishy.

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RESOURCES

NICKEL MINES—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO AVOID LAY-OFFS AND AID COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I was going to place my question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, but in light of his insensitive attitude to the unemployed workers in the Sudbury basin I will put my question to the Deputy Prime Minister and hope I receive a positive reply.

In view of today's announcement of 750 lay-offs by Falconbridge Nickel Mines—this brings to over 4,000, the recently announced lay-offs in the Sudbury basin, Thompson, Manitoba and Port Colborne—and in view of the fact that these lay-offs are precipitating an economic crisis within these communities as the thousands become jobless and find themselves with no alternative employment, contrary to the statements by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, will the Deputy Prime Minister now give this House a guarantee that he will come before it within one week with a specific economic strategy to deal with the present crisis within the nickel industry; the crisis faced by the communities that house these corporations, and the crisis of unemployment faced by thousands of workers within this sector?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, a substantially similar question has already been addressed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In my view he expressed the government's attitude with a good deal of concern and sympathy toward the workers in Sudbury. Of course, it is not possible for me to give an undertaking to the hon. member along the lines he put forward in the latter part of his question.

Mr. Rodriguez: In view of the fact that the unemployed workers in Sudbury cannot eat sympathy, and the fact that the government has moved in the past to protect industries and their employees when they are going through such a crisis—the most recent example of this was the stockpiling of uranium for seven years—and as well that economic forecasts, including those of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources have predicted the probable recovery of nickel markets within one year, my question will be specific to the Deputy Prime Minister. Will he tell this House if he is prepared now, after today's announcement of still more disastrous lay-offs to finally take the necessary step of initiating a temporary stockpile of Canada's nickel?