

*Oral Questions*

With regard to the number of inspectors, it is a major preoccupation of mine, obviously. In recent days I have made a number of moves to strengthen the capacity, particularly of the CTC in this regard.

**Mr. Benjamin:** Madam Speaker, can we take it from the minister's response that he will now succeed with the Minister of Finance and the President of the Treasury Board in securing restoration of the number of air safety inspectors and rail transport inspectors?

Can we take it that the reduction in man-years of the Canadian Transport Commission will not occur, and can the minister assure the House that he will now insist on full enforcement of the present laws and regulations, in light of the experience of lack of enforcement long before the present safety inquiry took place?

**Mr. Pepin:** Madam Speaker, I am quite sure that there is hardly any limitation in the number of inspectors that might be needed if one is to cover the whole of the land.

One of the purposes of Bill C-18, which is presently in committee, is to make the maximum use of inspectors at other levels of government than the central one, that is, at the provincial and municipal levels. When this bill is passed, a major effort in this direction will be made.

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**MINES****REQUEST TASK FORCE INVESTIGATE MINING ACCIDENTS**

**Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma):** Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Labour I will direct my question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the tragic mine accident last Friday in Elliot Lake, Ontario, in which three miners were killed—I am sure every member in the House would want to join me in expressing sympathy to the bereaved families—and also in view of the dramatic increase in mine accidents in Ontario in which some 17 miners and surface workers have been killed in the last six months, I should like to ask the minister if the government is prepared to take action to see a task force established, in co-operation with the province, to investigate this alarming increase in fatal mine accidents.

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, I understand that the Minister of State for Mines and the Minister of Labour have been studying this situation with great attention recently. I understand they are considering a proposal like the one suggested by the hon. member. I hope that both ministers will be in a position to give a definite answer to the hon. member very soon.

**AGRICULTURE****DROUGHT IN WEST—ON-SITE COMMITTEE STUDY**

**Mr. Charles Mayer (Portage-Marquette):** Madam Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Deputy Prime Minister or to the government House leader. It has to do with the very serious situation in western Canada which has come about as a result of lack of rainfall and very high temperatures over the past few months.

I wonder if either of the two hon. gentlemen would consider the suggestion that the Standing Committee on Agriculture be given a reference to travel to western Canada to view at first-hand some of the problems we have there, and also to listen to the producers' suggestions on some solutions that might be forthcoming from the government.

[Translation]

**Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council):** Madam Speaker, a while ago the Minister of Transport in his answer to the Leader of the Opposition indicated that the government was taking effective steps under the circumstances. The hon. member has now made a suggestion which seems interesting. I can assure him that I will take it into serious consideration.

[English]

**HARVESTING OF CATTLE FEED IN NATIONAL PARKS**

**Mr. Charles Mayer (Portage-Marquette):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate that answer and I urge the House leader to take a serious look at the problem.

I have a supplementary question which I should like to direct to the minister responsible for Parks Canada. It refers to a topic on which I have had discussion with him concerning both the grazing of cattle and the harvesting of cattle feed in Riding Mountain National Park and to some extent in Prince Albert National Park. Let me point out that I have done some investigation into this matter. I should like to ask the minister if he is prepared to give that suggestion his serious consideration.

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment):** Yes, Madam Speaker, the hon. gentleman spoke to me about this question last week, and as a result I have been able to make some inquiries specifically as regards Riding Mountain park.

There are, I am told, about 2,000 acres which could be used potentially. There are estimates that over 5,000 elk and deer would be using that forage in the Riding Mountain park. Given past park policy, we do not open up the parks for grazing to outside animals. It would be contrary to the presently established policy to meet the kinds of concerns the hon. member has expressed to me. I would, therefore, be reluctant to recommend that to the House.

It may be that the hon. member would have further information which he would like to give to me which would give me the basis to make further inquiries. I would be extremely happy to undertake to do that if he would do so.