

Oral Questions

with recording devices, from which transcripts would be later typed by less skilled and less well paid court reporters. In short, the question is one of the deskilling of women's jobs contrary to the guidelines on technological change of the Minister's own Department.

Would the Minister agree that this shows that the guidelines are inadequate, and that instead legislation is needed, such as has been proposed by the Leader of the NDP on Friday in "Technological Change for a Fair Recovery?"

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): No, Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the conclusion of the Hon. Member, but I agree that she has raised an important question. I will reflect on her representations and look into it for her.

● (1440)

QUALITY OF TRANSCRIPTS PRODUCED FROM TAPE RECORDINGS

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. The question concerns employment aspects, the deskilling of women's jobs. It also takes into account the question of justice. The decisions to be made involve the lives of people, refugees and immigrants. The quality of the product produced by this new system being proposed, which has been introduced elsewhere in Canada, is deteriorating. This has been shown where the system has been used before. Could we have a firm undertaking that both these principles would be considered, the quality of the product and crucial decisions and the commitment to real technological change, that will improve the quality of working conditions as is promised in the guidelines?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I do understand the substance of the Hon. Member's question. I do agree it is a serious question, and I will look into both aspects she has raised.

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INDUSTRY

PETROCHEMICAL TASK FORCE REPORT—DATE OF PRESENTATION

Hon. Bud Cullen (Sarnia-Lambton): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. Approximately a week ago I asked the Minister whether he knew when the petrochemical task force report would be presented. I understand it is now imminent. Does the Minister have more precise dates? Does he anticipate the report will be made public? Will he be meeting with the authors of that particular report following its presentation?

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Yes, Mr. Speaker. On Friday, the co-chairman of the task force on petrochemicals indicated that the task force would like to make its report public on the morning of

February 6. A press conference will be held. I understand the task force will be contacting the chairmen of the three caucuses with respect to briefings to the various caucuses at a time suitable to them.

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PRIVACY

SEARCH OF GOVERNMENT FILES FOR CORRESPONDENCE FROM MEMBERS

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to that asked by the Hon. Member for Provencher and it is addressed to the Acting Prime Minister. The Acting Prime Minister talked about freedom of information. He misses the point. What we are concerned with is another statute of this Parliament, the Privacy Act, and the shameful abuse of the privileges of this House. That is what is at issue here. What, in the opinion of the Government, is acceptable in a free and democratic society? What is morally acceptable? Is it morally acceptable for the Minister of Finance to search the files of a Member of this House, who may be in opposition to the Government, or of any citizen, and stand in his place in this House and then misrepresent shamefully what is contained in those files?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, a moment ago when I answered the way I did, some Members on the other side seemed to be annoyed by what I was saying. You will find on page 694 of *Hansard*:

HON. MARC LALONDE (MINISTER OF FINANCE): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition says that I distorted the truth. If that is his argument, will he let me release the letter—

Mr. Nielsen: "The letter."

Mr. Pepin:

—he sent to my officials at that time on this particular subject?

Mr. Nielsen: It, singular. "It."

Mr. Pepin: And we find:

MR. MULRONEY: Release it any time.

MR. NIELSEN: Table it.

Mr. Nielsen: Singular. "The letter."

Mr. Pepin: There was a challenge there.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Pepin: That is obviously an exception in answer to a challenge from some of the Members who love to issue them and get what they ask for.

Mr. Nielsen: The challenge was there?

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for St. John's East.