

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

government is determined to provide decent wage standards for the working people of Canada. While 30 per cent of Canadian workers are organized, the percentage stands at 50 per cent in those industries within federal jurisdiction. Many workers, particularly in the unorganized sector, are in low-paying jobs. Some time ago the federal government established minimum wage legislation. Periodically, this federal minimum wage has been increased. Today it stands at \$1.65 an hour, the highest in Canada.

The Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) believes it is a major responsibility of the government to continue to assure, by law, an adequate minimum wage and to secure compliance with the rules and regulations which form the Canada Labour (Standards) Code. The Department of Labour and the minister support the view that Crown corporations like the CNR are bound to comply with the federal minimum wage legislation, as are all other industries coming within federal jurisdiction.

A short while ago the minister instructed his officials to proceed with action designed to establish beyond all doubt the obligation of the CNR to pay at least the federal minimum wage. It is not the minister's prerogative to determine in law whether federal minimum wage statutes apply to all phases of Canadian National operations. Without any doubt, however, if legal ambiguities are resolved in favour of federal jurisdiction, the Minister of Labour will continue to enforce vigorously federal minimum wage provisions on behalf of all Canadian National employees.

With respect to the hon. member's other observations, the Department of Labour shares with him a hope that the outstanding differences between the CNR and its employees will be resolved satisfactorily. The minister has stated in this House that the report of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications should be required reading, not only by the CNR but also by the unions in view of the report's wide-ranging recommendations for both management and labour.

One current dispute between the CNR and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers is at the conciliation stage, as is a dispute between the CPR and the same union. Other disputes between the CNR and the unions representing most other categories of railway employees are at the direct negotiation stage, that is, no conciliation officer or board has been appointed. The specific question of pensions is dealt with in the demands presented by most unions involved in the current negotiations. The Department of Labour's industry specialist, Mr. Arthur Gibbons, is keeping in very close touch with the parties and the proceedings. The government is sure that both parties realize the importance of the negotiations. I thank the hon. member for directing these important inquiries to the Department of Labour.

[Translation]

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY—GENERAL  
DE GAULLE'S FUNERAL

**Mr. René Matte (Champlain):** Mr. Speaker, the question I asked last week was rather important although it was received with indifference by the Right Hon. Prime

[Mr. Perrault.]

Minister (Mr. Trudeau). Since 1968 we have been getting used to that eloquent silence which is a manifestation of the childish and offhand streak in his personality. The carnations (*oeillets*) that he often wears in his buttonhole do not make us forget the blinkers (*oeillères*) on both sides of his head. He refuses to see anything but his own opinions.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I would call on the hon. member to speak on the question to be discussed at the present time. The hon. member must be relevant, that is, deal with the question which he had asked in the House earlier. As he has not received the reply which he expected, he is entitled under Standing Orders to discuss the matter later, but he must only deal with the subject of the question.

● (10:10 p.m.)

**Mr. Matte:** Why, Mr. Speaker, does the Prime Minister keep silent instead of answering the questions that are put to him? It is a rather simple question. Had he any reasons for refusing to attend General de Gaulle's official funeral? Is it because all the eminent chiefs of State went to Paris on that occasion that the Canadian Prime Minister has not deigned to do so? Does he have any complexes in front of Nixon, Heath, Kosygin, Saragat and the pleiad of other chiefs of State? Does he question the value of the greatest man of contemporary history? Why turn up his nose at the remains of the one who had the last word with such famous men as Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin? Why does he not recognize France's great saviour?

Some concepts of the General undoubtedly gave rise to discussions, if not dissensions, but are those sufficient reasons to show the whole world such pettiness? The President of the United States has not always been in agreement with the General, nor has the British Prime Minister. Yet, they were there. So was the head of the U.S.S.R. Such occasions are surely not the right time for a show of petty spite.

It took a prime minister like ours to dare bring shame to our country. God knows that the prime minister is fond of travelling. He goes here and there, skiing, scuba-diving, cruising, etc. He keeps saying that he wants his privacy to be respected. We know how he has run down newspapermen—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I must interrupt the hon. member. I have recognized him for a question and not a speech on the subject of the Prime Minister. The matter before us now is General de Gaulle's funeral and not whether the Prime Minister has answered the question or not.

The hon. member might perhaps on another occasion ask the Prime Minister why he did not answer his question. If there is no answer he will be able to give notice to the Chair and discuss the matter later. At present the matter under consideration is the funeral of General de Gaulle and this has nothing to do with the silence of the Prime Minister.

**Mr. Matte:** Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to justify the question.