

In this situation, there have already been extensive discussions both in this House and in the Ontario legislature, as well as ongoing meetings at every level, to discuss the situation which has been precipitated in the nickel mining industry and expressed by lay-offs at the International Nickel Company. Indeed, the very language of the motion put forward by the hon. member indicates that the situation that Falconbridge announced today aggravates an already serious situation.

I am also influenced by the fact that the announcement by Falconbridge Nickel Mines today allows for some six months before the lay-offs are to take effect, in order to continue the kind of discussions that are already going on between the company and the union and government at the provincial and federal levels.

To a certain extent, I am also influenced—although I put this at the end of the list—by subparagraph (5) of the rule and by the language of the supply motion for this afternoon. This is a rather wide-ranging motion having to do with industrial strategy in Canada and is critical of the government, including in its terms the resource industries. I am sure that those participating in the debate this afternoon will have an opportunity to express themselves on the subject either incidentally or entirely and will still be relevant to the motion now before us.

I want to stress however, that this is not my main reason. My main reason is that which I set out before, that this is a situation which is under considerable negotiation. Meetings and discussions are taking place, and I think it would be inappropriate to grant an application under Standing Order 26 at this time. I do not rule out the possibility of a further application at a later date which might receive different consideration if the circumstances vary. Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

TRADE—ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—ALLEGED GOVERNMENT FAILURE TO ESTABLISH INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Mr. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West) moved:

That this House condemns the Liberal government and in particular the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and his predecessors from 1963 onward, for their failure to develop an industrial strategy to govern industrial development in Canada, their failure to develop adequate policies to assist export trade and to improve the domestic market in Canada for Canadian goods and services by strengthening the Canadian manufacturing industry, and their failure to provide a mechanism for effective consultation with Canadian manufacturing industry, and their failure to provide a mechanism for effective consultation with Canadian manufacturing and resource industries, including the fishing and agriculture sectors, in the Tokyo Round of the GATT negotiations under way now in Geneva and during 1978.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair notes that not later than 9.45 o'clock p.m., every question necessary to dispose of proceedings shall be put forthwith in accordance with Standing Order 58(10).

Trade

Mr. Crosbie: Your Honour has just read the motion which I hope the House is going to adopt today. If we adopt this motion, I imagine it will terminate the life of the government—which is a desirable move. This is a serious motion because the manufacturing industry of Canada is in a serious condition. There will be at least four other speakers, besides myself, from the official opposition who will speak on different aspects of the motion.

When I was asked to become critic of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce by our leader in September, I had to confess that I was by no means an expert in the field, particularly in view of the fact that the part of the country I come from is not heavily industrialized. I have had to do considerable homework over the last several months to try to find out the condition of Canadian industry and what the prospects are for trade and commerce. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I have discovered that the state of our industry and our prospects in the negotiations at Geneva are shocking.

● (1542)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: I regret that the new minister appointed in September is not improving matters which were left in pretty poor shape by his predecessors. Mind you, he has had a lot of predecessors. This department, like many others of the government, has had five ministers since 1972. In November, 1972, Mr. Pepin left the portfolio at the invitation of the Canadian electorate in his district. Then the present Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie) took over for two years and ten months. Then came the present Minister of External Affairs (Mr. Jamieson) for a year, and then came the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) for a year. Finally, in 1977, came the present minister.

Mr. Speaker, no minister can do justice to a department if he is there for only 12 months. It takes 12 months to understand what the department is all about. This is an example of how little the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) cares about how well his ministers in the department perform. He has this whirling dervish fancy of changing ministers every year. I note his predecessor, the late Mr. Pearson, did not do that. In the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce for example, the present member from Montreal, Mr. Drury, was five years in that portfolio. This department has not had a real star as a minister since our member for Prince Edward-Hastings (Mr. Hees) left the portfolio in February, 1963. He was the last Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce in Canada who made any impact on the world—or Canada—and he is the gentleman I am so proud to sit with here on the Progressive Conservative side of the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: Our present minister is apparently sanguine and satisfied with the present state of affairs of our Canadian industry, our trade and commerce. He is soporific about them. He is not worried. He is steer-like in his attitude toward his portfolio. He is contented. I asked him the other night whether