

Inquiries of the Ministry

difficulties which the fluctuation of the Canadian dollar has caused them in taking orders for the future, and again this is reflected in the employment picture. Would—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that the first part of his supplementary question was in order but it seems to me that he went on to present an argument. Perhaps we might overlook the latter part of his supplementary question if either the Prime Minister or the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, who seems to be very anxious to resume the floor, might reply.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, may I appeal for an answer from the Prime Minister? We get nothing from this minister.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): My comment on that is very simple, Mr. Speaker. Where has the hon. member been for the past year? That is the answer.

Mr. Speaker: At this point the Chair, subject to returning to the minister and the hon. member later during the question period, will recognize the hon. member for Timiskaming.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege—

Mr. Pepin: He is going to tell us where he has been.

Mr. Hees: May I tell laughing boy I have been here watching him run a formerly good department into the ground.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair again recognizes the hon. member for Timiskaming.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE**ONTARIO TAX REBATES FOR PERSONNEL AT UPLANDS AIR BASE**

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence with reference to the Ontario law which requires tax rental rebates to be paid by the end of December. Will the minister use his good offices to ensure that these tax rebates are made to the armed forces personnel living at Uplands air base?

Hon. Donald S. MacDonald (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I will look into that question right away.

* * *

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**NATIONALIZATION OF ALCAN PLANT BY GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA**

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the genial and loquacious [Mr. Hees.]

Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. It relates to the question I asked on Friday in which I referred to the imminent nationalization of Alcan properties by the government of Guyana. Considering recent events in that country, is the minister now in a position to tell the House and the country of the present situation and, in particular, as to what activities or discussions this government has entered into with the government of Guyana?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, an announcement was made today to the effect that the Alcan subsidiary had been nationalized by the government of Guyana. We regret that negotiations between the company and the government of Guyana have not been successful. I understand that discussions respecting compensation will now take place. We are keeping in touch with the situation.

Mr. Macquarrie: Mr. Speaker, am I to take it from the minister that the government of Canada and the government of Guyana did not partake of discussions or exchange views on this matter?

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, I think the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs have said on a number of occasions that it is not a right of the government of Canada to dictate the conduct of the government of Guyana in these matters. We put the case that we expect Canadian companies not to be discriminated against in these matters. That is about the extent of what we can do in these matters. I think the House will agree that this was the proper approach.

Mr. Macquarrie: Mr. Speaker, the minister obviously did not hear me. I talked not about dictation but about discussion. I take it there were no discussions.

[Later:]

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, on the question raised with respect to Guyana, I would not like to leave the impression that the Canadian government has not made proper representations to the government of Guyana. Conversations were held to that effect. The point I made a moment ago to the effect that we expect the Canadian companies to be properly treated was made in these bilateral conversations.

* * *

LABOUR CONDITIONS**UNEMPLOYMENT—REPRESENTATIONS BY AMHERST AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL**

Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland-Colchester North): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Has the Prime Minister's attention been drawn to a letter to him from the Amherst and District Labour Council which states that practically 50 per cent of the unemployed live in Quebec and the Maritime provinces, takes objection and exception to the comments he makes when