

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Nicholson: A combination of qualities is desirable and the situation will be carefully considered to be sure we get the best men available.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

BRITISH COLUMBIA—REFUSAL OF UNION
OFFICIAL TO ANSWER QUESTIONS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I rise to address a question to the kindly Solicitor General with a great deal of righteous indignation because this matter is of national significance. In view of the fact that Mr. Orville Braaten, a respected trade union leader and a member of our party, was sentenced to jail for contempt of court and was walked off handcuffed for refusing to answer questions on the ground that the instructions from the Solicitor General placed time limitations on questions that could be asked in the inquiry, will the minister inform the house what he intends to do to correct this situation and whether he intends to be represented at any hearings questioning the validity of the public inquiries act of British Columbia?

Hon. L. T. Pennell (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I am informed no reference was made to the Solicitor General before the commissioner by Mr. Braaten or his counsel in relation to the incidents which led to Mr. Braaten being cited for contempt. Furthermore, I or no one acting on my behalf issued instructions placing general limitations on questions that could be asked at the inquiry, nor would I have any authority to do so. Under the circumstances it is not our intention to be represented at the proceedings now before the Supreme Court.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

INQUIRY AS TO DECISION ON NAVY
HYDROFOIL PROGRAM

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. Russell MacEwan (Pictou): I have a question for the Minister of National Defence. Has the minister made a decision on the matter of the hydrofoil program for the Royal Canadian Navy? If so, what is that decision?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of National Defence): No final decision has been taken as yet, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. MacEwan: May I ask the minister, because many months have gone by, if he can tell the country and the navy when he will be deciding this important question?

[**Mr. Starr:**]

Mr. Hellyer: Soon, I hope, Mr. Speaker. It is my earnest hope that within a few days or weeks there will be time for contemplating some of the important decisions that have to be taken, including this one.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

SYDNEY, N.S.—LAY-OFFS AT STEEL PLANT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): I have a question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration which presumably would be supplementary to the questions put by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam with regard to the laid off automobile workers. May I ask the minister if he can advise the house today what is being done by his department and the government to assist the 1100 steel workers who have been laid off at the Sydney steel plant? When he is replying to the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam in detail, could the minister provide further information in detail with regard to this important subject, since some of the men who have been laid off have seniority of 16 years or more?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to making a report on that case as well.

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): I did not quite catch what the minister said was being done at the moment. He is going to reply in detail later?

Mr. Speaker: Order. My understanding is that the question has been answered by the minister.

[*Later:*]

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South): I have a question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. It is related to the question asked by my colleague from Cape Breton North and Victoria (Mr. Muir), and has to do with the 1100 men laid off at the Sydney steel plant. I ask the minister whether he is in on any plans that will alleviate the situation in Sydney.

Mr. Marchand: Mr. Speaker, I have said that I am ready to make a detailed report on this matter. In the meantime the department is doing what it should do. As the hon. member knows we have in Canada manpower centres which try to find jobs for people and which direct people to jobs where those are available. Some people are invited to move if