

of Canada would take specific steps. In view of his experience in this House, the Hon. Member will know that when we deal with various countries on an international level, a number of factors must be taken into account. At present, with respect to the Turks, the Government of Canada is maintaining contacts. We have someone in External Affairs who has just returned from Turkey. We are attempting to, and hopefully will manage to solve the matter with the Turkish authorities, at the same time as we are preparing amendments to the refugee status that will soon be introduced.

The Hon. Member will have no difficulty appreciating that we are working on exceedingly delicate matters requiring a tremendous amount of attention, in view of the excessively open nature of our Canadian law with respect to the status of refugees.

• (1450)

[English]

REQUEST FOR INTRODUCTION OF AMENDING LEGISLATION

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, once again the Minister has not dealt with my question. On July 24 the Immigration Minister promised to take action against those unscrupulous consultants and lawyers who are promoting this illegal immigration. It is now December and we have seen nothing happen. It has also been more than a year that the Government has been promising amendments to the Immigration Act to deal with the refugee problem. Most recently they were promised for the fall. The fall has gone by and we are into December. When will we have those amendments?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, do I have to remind the Hon. Member that the lawyers he is referring to are Turkish lawyers. They are not lawyers who deal with . . . I am sorry, but if the Hon. Member wants to co-operate, I will provide him with the information he needs to ask a question that contains correct information.

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[English]

INDUSTRY

ANNOUNCED CLOSURE OF CANADA PACKERS PLANT IN WINNIPEG

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Prime Minister or the appropriate Minister, the Minister responsible for DRIE, perhaps. My question has to do with the fact that the city of Winnipeg, which is still reeling from the CF-18 contract, the railbus business, et cetera, learned this morning that Canada Packers in Winnipeg will be shutting down its hog and beef kill

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industry at the cost of some 475 jobs. What does the Government intend to do about this closure? Is the Government prepared to admit now that the kind of economic development policy it has in place for Manitoba is one whereby a \$1 million grant went to Neepawa and contributed to this closure? And will the Government adopt a coherent economic development policy for Manitoba?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I think I will simply put matters back into context, and also mention to the Hon. Member that, first, this is a corporate decision, a decision that was made because we were told the plan was very old and it was becoming hard for the company to modernize the system. We have always entertained an interest in the matter, and we have indeed asked to meet the corporation's president in order to explore the possibilities. If the company is interested in proceeding with a modernization plan, I can assure the Hon. Member that this Government is very much concerned about regional development and we will keep on pursuing that goal.

[English]

Mr. Blaikie: The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that the company had made a request to the federal Government for assistance in modernizing its plant. Instead the federal Government chose to give money to the new plant in Neepawa, which contributed to the situation before us today.

GOVERNMENT POSITION ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): I want to ask the Minister and the Prime Minister, as I have asked them before, when will someone in the Government stand up and say exactly what the Government has in mind for Winnipeg besides denial of contracts, closures and postponements of other things which would have been accomplished by now had it not been for the election of a Progressive Conservative Government?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): May I restate once more, Mr. Speaker, this Government's intention and commitment to work at all times at helping regional development, and again our interest and determination to meet company officials and examine the alternatives with them, in order to save the jobs involved in Winnipeg.

[English]

GRANT AWARDED TO NEEPAWA PLANT

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a supplementary question to the same Minister. When the DRIE grant was given two years ago to the plant in Neepawa, assurances were given by Conservative Members of Parliament and Ministers from Manitoba that it would not in any way have an effect upon the employment base of Canada Packers. We have now lost 470 jobs.