

council, and then item No. 38, second reading of Bill No. C-168, to amend the Criminal Code.

As for the business on Tuesday, I prefer to wait the return of the government house leader who will no doubt be in touch with the leaders of the several parties on Monday.

AGRICULTURE

QUEBEC—STATEMENT ON INQUIRY AS TO ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Bruce S. Beer (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the hon. member for Portneuf asked me a question in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture. I am prepared to inform him that no representation has been made by the province of Quebec in respect of his question.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

WINNIPEG—ASSISTANCE FOR EMPLOYEES OF ROYAL ALEXANDRA HOTEL

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the fact that the Canadian Pacific Railway hotel, the Royal Alexandra, an old landmark in Winnipeg, is to be closed, will the minister make the good offices of his department available to the 100 or more employees who will be put out of work by this closure?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, this is the first time I have heard that this hotel is going to be closed. Of course the services of the department will be offered to these employees.

[Translation]

QUEBEC—INQUIRY AS TO STEPS TO MEET UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Théogène Ricard (Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration:

In view of the recent statement by Mr. Lucien Saulnier, chairman of the executive committee of the city of Montreal, expressing concern over the constant increase in unemployment in that area, is it the minister's intention to meet him immediately to elaborate plans whereby the city of Montreal and

Inquiries of the Ministry

the federal government might relieve the situation?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, if Mr. Saulnier feels that he should meet the Minister of Manpower and Immigration or his officials, I am entirely at his disposal.

[English]

DISCUSSIONS RESPECTING LAY-OFFS OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. What action is the government taking to meet the serious situation created by substantial lay-offs of railway workers? Are the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Labour discussing this matter with the presidents of the two railway companies?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, every possible action is being taken, but I will be glad to talk to the Minister of Labour and to the Minister of Transport on the specific question immediately.

Mr. Coates: I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Labour. Would the Minister of Labour indicate what he is doing about this serious situation?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, meetings took place yesterday under the chairmanship of the Minister of Transport at which there were representatives of the railways, of my department and of the department of manpower, who have a very special interest in this problem. This matter was discussed and I can say, as the hon. member was assured by the Prime Minister, that every action is being taken that the circumstances warrant.

Mr. Coates: A further supplementary question to the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate whether he or any of his colleagues met with the two presidents of the major railways to discuss this problem?

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question arising out of the answer of the minister to the question asked by the hon. member for Cumberland. The hon. member asked whether the minister had met with the railway presidents and the Minister of Labour answered in such a way that the only interpretation that could be put upon it was that