

earlier with the construction of a causeway or bridge to Lennox Island Indian reservation but hoped that he would shortly be able to make an announcement with respect to the project. Is the minister able to make such an announcement today? If not, when might he be able to do so? Has the minister had any communication with the government of Prince Edward Island which was under the very firm impression that the project would go ahead this spring?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, that was our intention, but as the cost was found to be too great, we are reconsidering the proposal. As soon as we are able to submit a report to the House, I shall be happy to so inform the hon. member.

[English]

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES—ALLEGED BIGOTRY OF SUPERVISORS IN NOT ENSURING JOBS FOR NATIVE PEOPLE

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Are the minister or his officials investigating the charge contained in a resolution passed by the Northwest Territories Council that his department is hiring as supervisors thinly disguised bigots who are doing little, if anything, to ensure that native people are hired for anything but unskilled positions?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, most of the civil servants in the Northwest Territories are hired locally by the government; it is answerable to the Council which adopted that resolution, copy of which I have yet to receive.

However, I want to point out to the hon. member that we have conferred much authority upon the government of the Northwest Territories, as the hon. member has requested so often.

[English]

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, would the minister investigate the claim that a very high percentage of those employed on drilling crews, for which not much skill is required, are being recruited in southern Canada instead of from the native people in the territory?

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, it is true that many of those who are hired come from the south, but I point out to the hon. member that two years ago we established a school in Edmonton to train Indians and Eskimos of the north as competent members of those crews. I think that last summer about 20 of them worked in those crews, and we hope that industry will be able to hire many more next season.

Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

POLICY OF TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT RESPECTING HIRING OF NATIVE PEOPLE

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the Minister of Transport. Is it the normal policy of the Department of Transport not to hire native people? I refer to the same report mentioned by the hon. member for Winnipeg North. If not, is the government going to investigate the allegations of discrimination and, if so, will the findings be made public?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It seems to me that the hon. member is repeating substantially the same question that has already been asked. There may be new aspects to it and it might be easier for the minister to answer the hon. member's question.

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, there certainly is no policy of not hiring native people—quite the contrary. As for the allegations in the item to which the hon. member has referred, I will undertake an investigation and I see no reason that the outcome should not be made public.

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AGRICULTURE

INTERPROVINCIAL MARKETING—DISCUSSION AT FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister. In view of the very serious problems which have been created as a result of provincial regulations interfering with the free flow of agricultural products, is the present federal-provincial conference dealing with this situation and is there any intention to suggest a solution?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): I am not sure, Mr. Speaker. My colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, is at the conference today so perhaps it has got around to this item. Certainly it is our purpose to have a Canada with as few restrictions on interprovincial trade as possible.

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[Translation]

CRIMINAL CODE

AMENDMENT OF SECTION RESPECTING CONTEMPT OF COURT

Hon. Martial Asselin (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Solicitor General.

Does the minister intend, as suggested by some of his party's supporters during the week end, to introduce an amendment to the Criminal Code concerning condemna-