

*Inquiries of the Ministry***NORTHERN AFFAIRS****SUGGESTED WITHDRAWAL OF YUKON MINERALS BILL TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN EXPLORATION INDUSTRY**

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): I have a question for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development but before asking it I should like to welcome him back to the House and hope that he was successful in his hunting in the Yukon. The question concerns Bill C-187 which the minister announced in Whitehorse last Saturday will not be brought forward this session. In view of the 72 per cent decrease in investment capital flow in the Yukon last year in the mineral exploration field, will the minister restore confidence in that industry for next year's program by telling the House that it is not his intention to proceed with Bill C-187 but to withdraw it from the order paper and from the committee?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I was in the Yukon and I made a statement. The press in the Yukon responded in an editorial by saying it is responsible government at its best. The other day the hon. member said I was enjoying the outdoors. I worked on Saturday and I took a holiday on Monday. Yesterday I was in Calgary doing my work. I would like him to correct the record in that regard. I must say that the economy of the Yukon is very good. There is almost no unemployment there and the people did not complain. They like—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

An hon. Member: For you fellows to work one day out of three is pretty good.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. member for Calgary North is rising on a question of privilege I shall recognize him, but I think I should point out to hon. members that we are running behind the regular schedule this afternoon. Unless we limit supplementaries a number of hon. members will not have an opportunity to ask their questions.

Mr. Woolliams: I yield the floor to the hon. member for Yukon, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Nielsen: The reply of the minister displayed a rather astonishing sensitivity which seems to be shared by the treasury benches generally. May I ask in a very nice way whether the minister would restore confidence in the mineral industry in contemplating next year's exploration program by doing as they have asked and stating in the House that Bill C-187 will be withdrawn from the order paper and the committee. In this way we might get some restoration of investment.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I said in Whitehorse that this bill will not be proceeded with at this session. The committee was in the Yukon and received representations. I have decided that I want to study them and make changes if any need to be made. In terms of the prospects for investment in the Yukon, I must say it looks very good. Production of minerals in the Yukon this year was greater than the year before and I think it will be better next year.

• (2:40 p.m.)

MANPOWER**MEASURES TO ASSIST GENERAL MOTORS EMPLOYEES TO BE LAID OFF AT STE. THÉRÈSE, QUEBEC**

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): My question is for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the announcement yesterday that all the facilities of the minister's department will be brought to bear in terms of manpower retraining assistance to the workers about to be laid off at Ste. Thérèse, Quebec, and in view of the fact that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce acknowledged that the government had two or three months notice of this action, can the minister inform the House what specific measures have been taken by the government to alleviate the situation of the workers who are about to be laid off?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Again, in any of these individual cases the work being done is very comprehensive indeed, and I would like to get a full report to make to the House.

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[Translation]

LABOUR CONDITIONS**GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE TO EMPLOYEES TO BE LAID OFF BY CHEMCELL LIMITED, MONTMAGNY**

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, to pull the Minister of Labour out of unemployment in the House, I should like to put a question to him.

In view of the fact that hundreds of employees will be laid off when the Chemcell textile plant closes down in Montmagny early in October, will civil servants from his department be sent to Montmagny to help the employees concerned to benefit from the regulation providing financial assistance for the readaptation of employees in the textile and clothing industry, because there will then be a large number of requests and—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member put his question. He could perhaps give the minister the opportunity to answer it.

[English]

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour): I think the idea advanced by the hon. gentleman is a very good one and I will instruct the unemployment insurance officials to get into immediate contact with the company and the employees of the company who may be laid off in the near future.

[Translation]

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

May I also ask the minister whether the regulations of the board responsible for the implementation of the legislation providing for retirement pensions to workers who will become unemployed might not be amended so as to cover people at 54, because many will be affected at that particular age?