

We have been informed that the customers involved have indeed been consulted and that a decision will be announced in due time.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister consider that discussions with 60 of the 4,000 residents involved constitutes real consultation? When he entered public life, did he not assume responsibility for effective consultation?

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Canada Post): Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the Hon. Member that we have been asked to reduce the postal deficit and that the Minister of Finance has instructed us to try to do so by 1987-88. Such decisions must therefore be made by the Canada Post Corporation and we do not intend to interfere.

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[English]

ENERGY

JOB-CREATION CAPACITY

Mr. Jack Shields (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Minister has been quoted as saying that energy is not a job-creation sector. Does this mean that his Department has dropped the objective of energy as an engine for growth?

[Translation]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the development of the energy sector is a reality in every country. First of all, energy is the basis of a country's industry and can also become an export. The energy sector is therefore a tool for job creation in a country, but it is not an objective of the Department of Manpower and Immigration that the energy sector be used to create jobs.

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RAILWAYS

CN SHOPS AT POINT ST. CHARLES

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State (Transport), and that is because his senior Minister has refused outright to intervene in this matter and persuade CN not to transfer activities—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question.

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Although his senior Minister refuses to do so, is the Minister of State (Transport)

prepared to intervene in this matter with CN to prevent the worst from happening at Point St. Charles?

Hon. André Bissonnette (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. colleague very accurately described this week what the circumstances are at CN in Montreal. The company has made a number of corporate decisions which I think were justified. It said its locomotives were in better shape than ever before and needed fewer repairs. That is why the corporation has closed down a number of plants or repair shops. On the other hand, CN has announced that it is seeking contracts elsewhere, in the United States, to improve, not worsen, the situation in Montreal. Do not forget that over 100,000 jobs have been created in Montreal by the private sector, and CN can do the same.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): I may conclude, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister will not intervene either. I wonder why a Minister, the Minister of State (Transport) is so reluctant to rise in the House and defend people in his province who are being threatened by the actions of a Crown corporation. That I cannot understand, but perhaps the Minister would care to explain.

Hon. André Bissonnette (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, as usual, the Liberal Member is dramatizing the issue, as there have yet to be any lay-offs in Montreal. A statement was made by someone, not with the CN, who said that something might be happening, but CN's response was positive and with regard to the creation of new enterprises and new forms of management to preserve jobs and improve the job situation in Montreal.

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[English]

INDIAN AFFAIRS

REINSTATEMENT OF PERSONS TO STATUS RANK

Mr. John Parry (Kenora—Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. It refers to the intolerable delays which native people are experiencing in being reinstated under Bill C-31. Would the Minister tell us what progress has been made since May in reducing the predicted waiting time of three to four years for these people to get reinstated?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member is aware, the waiting period has been reduced. There were original estimates of some 65,000 or 68,000 applications for reinstatement to status. The reinstatement to status is something the Department and the Indian people take as being very important.