

Oral Questions

made aware that marijuana was found in Premier Hatfield's luggage. I would like him to advise the House who made him aware of those facts. What instructions did he give to the RCMP with respect to the finding of the marijuana? When did he first advise the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice—

Mr. Speaker: With great respect, the Member has asked three questions.

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I will try to respond to my hon. friend. As I recall, the information was conveyed to me by the Commissioner of the RCMP. I believe that would have been some time around September 26. I listened carefully, and the RCMP Commissioner and I had a brief discussion about the events.

MINISTER'S ROLE

Mr. John Nunziata (York South-Weston): Mr. Speaker, could the Solicitor General indicate what instructions, if any, he gave to the RCMP? When did he advise the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice of the fact that the marijuana was found in Premier Hatfield's luggage? Could he also indicate whether he or any officials in his Department advised Premier Hatfield of the finding of the marijuana during the investigation?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the RCMP Commissioner and I had a session in which he acquainted me with the facts. I gave the RCMP Commissioner no specific directions other than to proceed in the usual way which, as the Hon. Member knows, he is very competent to do. As I recall, there was no communication to anyone by me of any of the information that the Commissioner gave me, as far as I am aware, at least for some period of time. Of course the Minister of Justice and his officials had jurisdiction over much of this affair. As far as I am concerned, my role was simply to keep myself advised about the progress that the RCMP were making in carrying out their duties.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

PULP AND PAPER MILL EMPLOYEES

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Returning to the subject of unemployment, I am sure you would find it ironic, Mr. Speaker, that at the time when the Government was cutting back Katimavik by \$30 million, it spent \$36 million on uniforms for the armed services.

[*Translation*]

Be that as it may, Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance.

During the election campaign, the Prime Minister and the Hon. Member for Roberval, who now sits in Cabinet, promised

to resolve quickly the problems of the pulp and paper mill employees at Desbiens—a small town in the Lac-Saint-Jean area—which ceased operations three years ago. What I want to know this morning, Mr. Speaker, is whether the Minister of Finance will honour this commitment made by his Prime Minister during the election campaign?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am not able to give a specific response to the question of the Hon. Member. I will take it as notice and get back to him as soon as I can.

[*Translation*]

CLOSURE OF PULP AND PAPER MILL AT DESBIENS—NECESSITY FOR GOVERNMENT TO TAKE IMMEDIATE MEASURES

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

We have here a Minister of Finance who does not know anything at all about election promises.

Mr. Speaker, I am talking about a pulp and paper mill, and the Hon. Member for Roberval, who happens to be a Minister, is in the House this morning. Some 125 people have been out of work for three years, and all I want to know is whether the Minister or the Government will keep those elections promises. It was a serious promise, Mr. Speaker, and I want action now!

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I must remind the Hon. Member that the mill at Desbiens has been closed for four years and that we have hardly been in office for six months. Second, I am sure he recalls that the Saint-Raymond company submitted a project to the Governments of Quebec and Canada last December 19. Answers will be given in due time, and it has absolutely nothing to do with Government cutbacks.

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● (1140)

[*English*]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

PLIGHT OF MIDDLE AGED UNEMPLOYED

Mr. Ted Schellenberg (Nanaimo-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Let me add my compliments and kudos to the many she has already received on the Challenge '85 program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Schellenberg: But where is the challenge for those who are 30, 40 or 50 years of age, who are unemployed and not students? There are many middle aged people in my riding, with an unemployment rate in excess of 30 per cent, who are looking for that kind of challenge.