

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce):** Mr. Speaker, this is too easy a question. It is terribly easy for the hon. member to mention that plants, here and there, in Quebec or in Manitoba are closing. Indeed, plants will close in various parts of this country, but it is part of economic change and economic development that plants close and others open.

**Mr. McGrath:** That kind of progress we can do without.

**Mr. Lewis:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I understand that a minister has the right either to answer a question or not to answer it, but I am darned if he has the right to read a banal lecture to members of the House instead of replying to a question. If he does not know the answer, he should say so.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

**Mr. Pepin:** I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. The question raised by the hon. member was one that was six months old. It has been fully covered and investigated by two or three departments of government. It is unfair for him to resurrect cases that are six months old and enumerate plants that are closing in the country.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I wonder whether the debate between the hon. member and the minister either on a point of order or a question of privilege will be very fruitful.

**Mr. Hees:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be able to restore calm to the chamber.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for York South is rising on a question of privilege.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to take up time this way, but, as a member of the House I do not for one moment intend to sit back and take that kind of remark.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

**Mr. Lewis:** The accusation of unfairness was unwarranted. I am concerned about the matter because the closing will take place on March 5. If the minister cannot do anything about it let him admit it instead of saying these things.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. We still have not accomplished very much. The hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

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**NATIONAL PARKS****TRANSFER OF TRENT VALLEY AREA TO PARKS ADMINISTRATION**

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** The third time is lucky, Mr. Speaker. Since the Minister of Trans-

[Mr. Lewis.]

port and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development are both in the House, may I direct my question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. May I ask whether the takeover by his department from the Department of Transport of the Trent Valley system in order to turn that beautiful area into a national park has been completed, and whether we can expect work on this project to start soon?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, the transfer has not yet been completed, but we hope it can soon be carried out.

[English]

**Mr. Speaker:** Orders of the day.

**Mr. Peddle:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of the question period I have been rising to ask what I regard as a very important question. I had hoped that Your Honour would not regard by brief intervention earlier as being anything more than a reflex action provoked by the previous question.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member may have an important question to ask but I am sure there are other hon. members who also have important questions which could not be raised. Unfortunately the question period is over. The hon. member might, with the unanimous consent of the House, ask his question if he so wishes. I tried to give an opportunity to every member who rose, and a number of hon. members who were given an opportunity to ask questions were rising for a second time. I may be wrong, but I have the impression that the hon. member was called upon earlier in the question period. In any event, I hope his question can wait until Monday.

**Mr. Peddle:** When Your Honour expresses the hope that my question can wait, does it mean that if it cannot wait you will allow it?

**Mr. Speaker:** I would be prepared to allow the question now. I suggest to hon. members that the hon. member be allowed to ask his question, though I was under the impression I had recognized him at the beginning of the question period.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

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**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****FUTURE USE OF GOOSE BAY BASE BY UNITED STATES AIR FORCE—RENEWAL OF LEASE**

**Mr. Ambrose Hubert Peddle (Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador):** My question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister in his capacity as Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the announced 40 per cent reduction in forces by the United States Air Force at Goose Bay, can the minister inform the House whether, in the discussions which took place prior to the announcement,