

Oral Questions

who today are running rampant in all parts of our country?

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, I am personally inclined to believe that we need more stringent measures with respect to guns. The question both of the substance of our gun laws and the penalties will be considered, and in consultation with the government and the Minister of Justice we shall put some measures before the House in due course when they are ready.

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● (1430)

[Translation]

INDUSTRY**TEXTILES—SUGGESTED MEASURES TO SLOW DOWN LAY-OFFS**

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

In view of the precarious situation of the textile industry in Quebec and the numerous lay offs, can the minister tell the House whether the Textile and Clothing Board, which has been commissioned to look into that matter, has presented an interim report to the minister, recommending measures to reduce the importations of textile products which compete with those products that can be domestically manufactured?

[English]

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the Textile and Clothing Board provided me with an interim report just before the House rose for Christmas, at which time I announced a number of measures based on that interim report. It was stated also that the Textile and Clothing Board would be going into other questions in greater depth, and I would expect that information in a report very shortly so that I will be able to make an announcement to the House next month.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**COMMUTATION OF SENTENCES FOR CAPITAL MURDER—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Solicitor General a question arising out of his answers to the question by the right hon. member for Prince Albert. In light of the fact that there has been a police officer killed in the city of Calgary recently, two killed in Moncton, and two individuals convicted of capital murder in British Columbia, is it still the policy of the Solicitor General and his department to commute the sentences to life imprisonment, particularly when in my opinion there was a fraud perpetrated on parliament in getting the last bill through in the fashion it was put through?

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would again have to suggest that the question anticipates a decision which may come before the Solicitor General or the Cabinet in future. I do not know whether the Solicitor General wants to comment, however, this certainly is a question which would anticipate a decision that is not to be made now but will have to be made in future.

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the House that commutations are decided by the Cabinet as a whole and not by me as Solicitor General. I also want to make it clear to the House that the cases referred to by the hon. member are not before the Cabinet at the present time, and when they come before Cabinet they will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, this is all very interesting and very academic. Would the Solicitor General explain to the House and the country why in all these cases in which people have been convicted of capital murder in relation to the killing of police officers or prison guards, the sentences have been commuted by this government and the government of Mr. Pearson for the last 10 years?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Even if he could or would, I would not let him.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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LABOUR RELATIONS**IMPLEMENTATION OF MR. JUSTICE HALL'S RECOMMENDATION FOR A HOLIDAY IN FEBRUARY**

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Labour? In view of the fact that the settlement of the last railway dispute by Mr. Justice Emmett Hall included an understanding that there would be a statutory holiday in February, thought then to be known as "Heritage Day", but in view of the fact the bill for such a holiday did not get passed by the last parliament, so that the railway companies are not giving the holiday to their employees, will the Minister of Labour give consideration to this matter in the hope that the full import of Mr. Justice Hall's recommendations might be implemented?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Yes I will, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, if it should be necessary to put legislation through parliament concerning this matter will the minister consult with the government House leader as to the possibility of there being unanimous agreement to do this without debate?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, the policy that would cover such a measure as the one the hon. member is speaking of is receiving active consideration by the government at the present time. As soon as that consideration is concluded I will be pleased to talk to the government House leader.