

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, for the short term through the budget the other night we made substantial funds available for direct job creation. Beyond that my officials will be meeting with the people concerned to see what can be done with regard to other measures, mobility and so on, but I cannot give the hon. member more precise information than that at the moment.

**Mr. Muir:** The minister mentioned mobility. We are back to the Gordon story: move them to Ontario; ship them out with a one way ticket. Last week there was also the closure of the Canadian Motor Industries plant, a Toyota assembly plant, with a further loss of jobs. Over the weekend the minister's own office estimated the unemployment rate in Cape Breton at the moment at 15 per cent to 20 per cent. Considering the source of these figures, I suggest it is a very conservative figure. In heaven's name, can the minister advise just what in hell his government is going to do to take us out of this Liberal depression? Please, someone!

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

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**TRANSPORT****LAY-OFFS BY RAILWAYS—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO KEEP EMPLOYEES AT WORK**

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. It relates to the summer lay-offs being put into effect by the Canadian Pacific Railway in the thousands and by the Canadian National Railways in the hundreds. The answers given thus far by the minister and by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development on his behalf have simply confirmed these lay-offs. Could the minister tell the House what he has done to try to persuade the railways to keep these employees at work, especially in view of the great need for improvement in the rolling stock and equipment of both railways?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, there are two railway companies in Canada: the Canadian National Railway, which belongs to the Canadian government, and the Canadian Pacific Railway, which is a private enterprise. The latter has its own collective agreement and union which provide for layoff procedures. There is therefore no reason for me to intervene. If I stepped in in the case of the CN, it was to prevent massive layoffs and the corporation agreed not to lay off more than 50 people every month as long as the economic circumstances continue to deteriorate. As soon as they stabilize, the CN will rehire these former employees. That is according to the terms of the agreement.

[Mr. Muir.]

[English]

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Even if the minister cannot intervene in the sense of forcing the railways to keep these employees at work, is he making any representations to them? In other words, is he doing anything more than simply receiving information from them?

[Translation]

● (1450)

**Mr. Marchand (Langelier):** Mr. Speaker, not only am I looking into the matter and trying to get some information, but I am also trying to exercise some influence, to the extent where the law and government authority will allow me. I doubt that it is news to the hon. member that the CP is an institution which has considerable influence in Canada.

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**CRIMINAL CODE****MINISTER'S POSITION ON RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT**

**Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Solicitor General of Canada.

Does he intend to revise his position about applying the law on capital punishment now in force in Canada in the case of the murder of a policeman or a prison guard, or does he at least intend to reevaluate the situation in the light of ever increasing crime and public debate, with a view to restoring capital punishment?

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[English]

**FINANCE****ONTARIO REBATE OF SALES TAX ON NEW AUTOMOBILES—POSSIBLE CONTRAVENTION OF GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE—MINISTER'S POSITION**

**Mr. Hal Herbert (Vaudreuil):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Minister of Finance? Does the Minister of Finance consider that the pre-election budget move of the Premier of Ontario, of giving a cash rebate of provincial sales tax on new cars built in North America, is in contravention of the terms and spirit of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and what is his attitude to the provincial intervention in an international agreement?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for High Park-Humber Valley.