

Inquiries of the Ministry

While I am standing may I apologize to certain members to whom I inadvertently gave an incorrect assessment before the recess. I said in the committee that there would be a hearing, but I was thinking in terms of a discontinuance. The CTC does not have authority to hold a hearing on this particular matter, but as I say I will discuss the matter in line with the representations made.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question which is based on the undertaking the minister gave us on December 10. What has happened in respect of the offer he made to convene a meeting of the CN management with members of constituencies affected in order to discuss the discontinuance of trains 5 and 6.

Mr. Jamieson: Nothing has happened. Perhaps it is my fault. I was under the impression that hon. members interested would get in touch with me and indicate a time. If you will let me know the time I will be glad to do it.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): The offer was accepted on December 10.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): In connection with this discontinuance of railway service will the minister press Canadian National Railways not to act in the arbitrary and altogether cavalier manner it has? After all, Parliament votes the money for the CNR and Parliament should have some right to say whether or not such action is justified.

Mr. Jamieson: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I repeat that I shall be very glad to make these representations to both railways, but I have to emphasize that where it is only a reduction in service there is no legal mechanism that can be employed. Where there is a discontinuance the CTC has indicated it will hold hearings on such discontinuance.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I realize this is so, but what about Parliament? Parliament votes the money, and surely these railway services should not be discontinued in the manner in which the CNR is now carrying on.

Mr. Orlikow: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the so-called reduction is in fact a complete cancellation, if only for some months, would the minister consider the possibility of amending the legislation so that this kind of discontinuing could be considered by the CTC?

[Mr. Jamieson.]

Mr. Jamieson: I shall be glad to consider that, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

SAINT-ROMUALD—LAY-OFF OF 325
EMPLOYEES OF B.V.D. COMPANY

Mr. Bernard Dumont (Frontenac): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

Could he tell the House what steps the government intends to take to prevent the dismissal of 325 employees at the B.V.D. plant at St. Romuald?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I met the mayor of St. Romuald, on Saturday, in Quebec City. Today, he is in Ottawa and we are in contact with the Department of Trade and Commerce of both the federal government and the province of Quebec. We are trying to find a way to prevent the closing of this plant.

Mr. Dumont: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a supplementary question.

Has the minister considered the possibility for the government to subsidize the construction of 24 Greek ships so as to prevent the Davie Shipbuilding yards in Lauzon from closing down?

Mr. Speaker: This is not a supplementary question.

[English]

BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM

INQUIRY AS TO LEGISLATION BASED ON
THIRD REPORT OF COMMISSION

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister. Does the government expect to introduce at this session legislation based upon the recommendations in the third report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which report was given to the government early in December, and may I say I feel sure that the Prime Minister and his colleagues have been studying it assiduously in the weeks that have intervened?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Well, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member has been studying it as assiduously as I have he will know that I do not see that it necessarily involves legislation at this session to implement some of its recommendations.