

Oral Questions

India, when the West German Government and the Swiss Government have managed to get two tourists out of there within days? Why has a Canadian Minister refused to help a Canadian press reporter? The Minister should follow what the French Government did in Afghanistan and do something to get this Canadian reporter back in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will allow the question, but I would advise Members in future that preambles to questions should at least relate to the questions that follow.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1430)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Hon. Member and everyone in the House that the Canadian High Commission has been following the case of Mr. Mann very closely since his arrest. Representations at the highest level have been made to India's Department of Foreign Affairs asking for the earliest possible consideration of Mr. Mann's case and that he be allowed to have visitors. Our representative has communicated with Mr. Mann by telephone on several occasions. Mr. Mann is in excellent health. He reports that he is very well fed, and as I have already mentioned, we are taking the necessary steps to ensure that his case will be examined as quickly as possible. We have even heard that he might be freed on bail, and I may also add that his mother, Mrs. Mann, has joined in our efforts and that we are keeping her informed.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I would first like to congratulate the Hon. Minister of State for coming to the rescue of the Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs. I would like to know whether the Government has made representations to India's High Commission in Canada and whether she could ask her senior Minister if, at four o'clock, this afternoon, when I meet in my office with India's High Commissioner in Canada we could cross the hallway so that the Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs may make direct representations to the High Commissioner.

Mrs. Vézina: Mr. Speaker, I can reassure the Hon. Member and tell him that I am not coming to the rescue of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It is my responsibility to reply to this question and I appreciate the fact that the Prime Minister has given me this responsibility because, in doing so, he has recognized all the years I have spent trying to improve the quality of life and protect human rights.

[*English*]

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

POSSIBLE REOPENING OF CYPRUS ANVIL MINE IN YUKON

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, whom I should like to congratulate on his appointment to that vital portfolio. Yesterday he appointed Pierre Lassonde from the Yukon suburb of Toronto to reopen the Cyprus Anvil mine as a profitable operation by December 31. The Minister says that there will be no federal bail-out of Cyprus Anvil. Would he explain, in everyday language which Yukoners could understand and which we could understand, just what financial tools he has provided to Mr. Lassonde? For example, does the mandate include loan guarantees, interim equity financing, or Crown corporation status for the White Pass & Yukon Railway as endorsed by the Deputy Prime Minister, none of which are bail-outs for Cyprus Anvil? Would he tell Hon. Members of the House just exactly what tools he has provided? They certainly were not clear in yesterday's communique.

Hon. David Crombie (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, may I also congratulate the Hon. Member on his polio—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crombie: I congratulate him on his critic portfolio.

Mr. Broadbent: What a Freudian slip!

Mr. Crombie: Well, I was the Minister of Health.

I want to assure the Hon. Member that the geographic location of Mr. Lassonde will not inhibit the work I asked him to do. The Hon. Member may recall that last week I indicated I had conducted a preliminary round of discussions with parties involved in the mine. At that time I determined whether or not there was an opportunity to see if the mine could be saved and reopened. My conclusion, as a preliminary finding, was that there was a possibility. It was on that ground that I asked for the services of Mr. Lassonde. I indicated to him that I wanted to have him go to all parties to the action to see what was possible. I constrained him in no way in bringing forward to me those actions which he thinks would be desirable in order to facilitate the opening of the mine.

Mr. Fulton: Last month the Minister travelled to Faro. I am sure he is aware that within days of his visit Cyprus Anvil went on strike and locked out the employees who were involved in the joint federal Government, company and union stripping program which was intended to run until December 31. Interestingly enough, that is the coincident date on which Mr. Lassonde is to report back to the Minister.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister. Would he tell Hon.