

Inquiries of the Ministry

not contributed directly in most cases in the building of these newsprint plants somebody else would have, and Canada would have lost the industrial advantages in supplying equipment.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS**UNEMPLOYMENT—PROJECTS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister. In light of his persistent statements in the House and on television recently that the present high unemployment is caused solely by unemployed younger people and that the rate of their entry into the labour force could not have been predicted and was unknown to him, can the Prime Minister tell us if he is aware that these young people were born many years ago and that their presence today should not come as any surprise?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure the hon. member will recognize that a question asked in those terms is not in order.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): I will try something else, Mr. Speaker. With respect to younger people who are unemployed—this phenomenon—and with respect to the unplanned Opportunities for Youth program last summer and its relative disaster—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Howard (Skeena): —has the Prime Minister any plans or projects specifically designed and selected so that younger people can be employed on particular projects, taking into account their concern about the environment?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, both questions were completely wrong in their premises and therefore I do not feel obliged to answer the conclusions.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): May I ask one further supplementary. Why, when the Prime Minister is on the defensive about something, does he have to be so insulting?

• (11:40 a.m.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There cannot be a supplementary to the question we have just had. I suggest to hon. members that the question was not in order. From the procedural standpoint, a supplementary to a question which is not in order cannot be asked. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Abitibi.

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[Translation]

POST OFFICE**IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL MAIL DELIVERY**

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Postmaster General.

Since Canadians living in rural areas pay the same price for postal services as city dwellers, would he tell the House whether he will take steps to improve rural mail delivery in the near future?

Hon. Jean-Pierre Côté (Postmaster General): New measures have been taken to improve this service, Mr. Speaker, and from the latest accounts I have received, the service has greatly improved.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Grey-Simcoe.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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TRADE**ACTION TO FULFIL COAL CONTRACTS WITH JAPAN**

Mr. P. V. Noble (Grey-Simcoe): I do not know what that applause is for, Mr. Speaker. Maybe it is on account of my patience and persistence as I have been trying to get the floor for about four days. I direct this question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In view of the fact contracts with Japan call for the annual shipment of nine and a half million tons of coal and we are falling short by about three million tons per year, is the government taking any action to encourage the fulfilment of these annual contracts, especially in view of the unemployment situation?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): I am sorry to say, Mr. Speaker, that I have not taken a personal interest in these particular difficulties. My understanding is that this industry has grown very rapidly in a very few years. It has these contracts and it is now experiencing teething problems. If I can make a contribution I will gladly do so.

Mr. Noble: In view of the fact Canadian mining companies are forced to look outside the country for experienced miners, will the government take the necessary action to ensure that Canadians will be trained to fill these positions?

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, I shall pass this question on to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration who has more to do with this than I have.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**ST. PIERRE AND MIQUELON—DISCUSSION WITH FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER OF BILATERAL AGREEMENT AFFECTING OFFSHORE RIGHTS**

Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West): I have a question for the right hon. Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. In the course of his talks this week with the French Foreign Minister, can the Prime Minister tell the House if he or any of his ministers raised the matter of a bilateral agreement affecting the traditional offshore rights of France off our east coast with particular emphasis on the status of St. Pierre and Miquelon?