

answered by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Mr. Stanfield: He said he did not know.

Mr. Trudeau: He said that we cannot make at this time any precise assessment because this is based on a series of hypothetical actions by a foreign government.

Mr. Saltzman: Mr. Speaker, the right hon. gentleman's answer leaves me in some doubt as to how the Canadian government can bargain with the United States when we cannot tell them in any reasonable way what the effects of the DISC program will be.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Would the hon. member please ask his supplementary. I believe he has been recognized for that purpose.

Mr. Saltzman: Mr. Speaker, may I then ask if the Prime Minister, before meeting with the President, intends to have some assessment made of what the potential damage to the Canadian manufacturing industry will be so he can indicate that to the President?

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, I will try to answer this question by repeating what I just said. It is terribly difficult to know what will come out of the United States Congress by way of a DISC program. One day we read in the papers that President Nixon is threatening to veto the tax bill. Today we read in the same papers that the employment tax credit may not go through—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Pepin: —that it might not become law.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, will the Prime Minister tell the House if the government's plans in this regard to assist Canadian exporters will be presented as amendments to amendments to the tax bill through the usual rubber stamp process?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for York South. There are a number of supplementaries to be asked but I think that in fairness we should complete the first round of questioning, after which I will return to the hon. member for Calgary North and the hon. member for Fundy-Royal.

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INDUSTRY

REDUCTION OF OPERATIONS AND LAY-OFFS BY CONSOLIDATED BATHURST LIMITED—STEPS TO ASSIST COMMUNITY

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. In view of press reports quoting the Prime Minister as saying last night in Toronto that Canada's economy is booming, may I ask whether he is aware that Consolidated Bathurst in Bathurst, New Brunswick, is laying off 450 mill workers and is closing down its woods operations with the expectation that there will be 1,400 people out of work in that small community?

Inquiries of the Ministry

What steps is the government taking to save that community from the disastrous situation into which it is now plunging?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we have been in communication with the New Brunswick government. I have spoken to the Premier myself. The Minister of Regional Economic Expansion or the Minister of Manpower and Immigration—I am not sure which. We sent an official down who is there now and who is trying to assist in finding ways to combat this unemployment.

Mr. Lewis: May I ask the Prime Minister whether, when he spoke to a black tie dinner of Canadians of Italian origin in Toronto last night, he tried to find out how many new Canadians of Italian origin in Toronto are out of work and expect to be unemployed this winter?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[Later:]

[Translation]

Mr. Herb Breau (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Prime Minister in connection with the lay-offs at the Consolidated Bathurst Limited.

Could he assure us that the Department of Manpower and Immigration will speed up the manpower services at the local office of the Consolidated Bathurst Limited, in order to lessen as much as possible the social inconvenience suffered by those families?

Mr. Trudeau: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the question is quite relevant and I have obtained the assurance that an official is already on the spot to look after that matter.

[English]

PULP AND PAPER—ASSISTANCE TO NEW BRUNSWICK IN MAKING SURVEY

Mr. Thomas A. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to the first question asked by the hon. member for York South. May I ask the Prime Minister whether, in addition to what he has said the government is doing and particularly in view of Premier Hatfield having shown great leadership in going ahead with a survey of the pulp and paper industry—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I wonder whether the hon. member is now asking a question. I have the impression that latest supplementaries have been more in the form of debate than supplementary questions. If the hon. member has a question by way of supplementary inquiry, he should ask it now.

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, I was thrown off track by the reference to Italians. I should like to get back to New Brunswick and to the original question. Since the province of New Brunswick is making a full survey of the pulp and paper industry will the federal government, in a particular way, offer its good services in connection with this whole matter?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry the hon. member was cut off when he was telling us how Premier Hatfield was showing leadership.