

Oral Questions

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member should not be quite so defensive about his position.

Mr. Young: Answer the question.

Mr. Axworthy: There were a number of representations made by many people, particularly Members of this caucus, concerning the plight of agricultural workers. It was this Government that made the change to extend the privileges of full coverage of unemployment insurance to that group.

I would remind the Members of the New Democratic Party who are bellowing in the corner that we were the ones who made the decision to make the change in the first place, and the kind of commitment which we made will be maintained.

We also believe that we have a responsibility to ensure that it works with some efficiency and with some productive ability of the farmers to administer the program. Those are the kinds of discussions that we are providing for all groups because we do have discussions before decisions.

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LABOUR RELATIONS**APPOINTMENT OF MEDIATOR IN EASTERN PROVINCIAL AIRWAYS DISPUTE**

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. It concerns the unfortunate work stoppage and strike between EPA and its pilots which is affecting all of Atlantic Canada and other parts of the country.

Does the Minister appreciate that in yesterday's appointment of a mediator he is appointing a mediator who, in effect, acted for CALPA in the last strike situation against EPA in 1980? Does he consider that this practice of appointing a mediator who represented one of the parties in the previous labour problem will ensure the necessary good faith of the parties to settle this matter now, and which should be settled now?

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member is referring to a mediator who was appointed by Labour Canada a week ago. He is the Chairman of the Newfoundland Labour Relations Board. He is a highly respected mediator who is knowledgeable in labour matters.

He has indicated to me in a cable that the participation in the previous labour matter was that of a member of his law firm. The credentials of Mr. Easton are the highest and are respected by the employers in the Newfoundland community. He had a preliminary meeting yesterday with both parties. We hope that he will be able to conclude his assignment successfully.

Mr. Nowlan: I am not casting any aspersions upon the integrity, character, or competency of the gentleman in question, Mr. Easton.

POSSIBLE REACTION OF COMPANY

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Madam Speaker, my question concerned the principle of having a person appointed, no matter how competent, whose law firm as well as himself acted for CALPA, the pilots, against the very company in question today during the last labour problem in 1980.

Does the Minister really expect, while the recognition of his competence by the employees is obvious, that the employers will be able to come to that mediation with the necessary good faith that is fundamental to resolving this issue?

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member is referring to the firm to which the mediator belongs. He is not referring to the mediator himself. As I said, the mediator himself has the highest credentials in labour relations in the industrial community. I would urge the Hon. Member to give Mr. Easton a chance to conclude his assignment.

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THE ADMINISTRATION**CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES—IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS**

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. It concerns the status of the conflict of interest guidelines which he established in 1980. The Prime Minister admitted that he has some concern about the effectiveness of the existing guidelines, and his Deputy Prime Minister said that the prohibitions are not enforceable. His Deputy also said that the final sanction rests with the Prime Minister.

Can the Prime Minister tell us in clear terms what sanctions he would impose upon a Cabinet colleague or Government official who violated a prohibition under the current guidelines? I remind him that he created these guidelines and that surely he has some obligation to explain them to us and the Canadian public.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, it is the privilege of the Prime Minister to give certain guidelines to his Ministers. He is the one who can decide what sanctions to take when those guidelines are not implemented. It can be done in various ways in discussions with the Ministers.

As far as former Ministers are concerned, they are, of course, not within the reach of the Prime Minister. I doubt, if he attempted to reach them, whether he would be allowed to do so within the Canadian Bill of Rights.

ROLE OF FORMER OFFICIAL IN IMMIGRATION CASE

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Madam Speaker, let me put a case to the Prime Minister. Under the existing guidelines a Cabinet Minister must avoid any suspicion of