

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): I have considered the matter and decided against it.

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MANPOWER**DEPARTMENTAL FORECASTS OF WINTER UNEMPLOYMENT LEVELS**

Mr. J. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): I have a question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration if I can get his attention. Can the minister in his new role inform the House whether or not his department has conducted any studies involving the forecasting of unemployment levels this winter and, if so, would he consider tabling such studies?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the department, of course, is constantly reviewing the situation. I shall have to look into the question of whether there is anything that would be suitable for tabling at this time.

ALLEGED CURTAILMENT OF ADULT TRAINING COURSES

Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Has a directive gone out to the Manpower offices asking them to curtail applications from unemployed people to take adult training courses in view of the great pressure on the budget because of the high unemployment rate?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I doubt very much whether any such directive has gone out, but I shall check.

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NORTHERN AFFAIRS**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO FOREIGN CONSORTIUM TO RE-OPEN BAFFIN ISLAND IRON MINES**

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Are any plans being considered by his department for the granting of financial assistance to a consortium of South African and American corporations to re-open the iron mines on Baffin Island?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, we are studying the Merry River project undertaken on Baffin Island. We have not yet defined any final policy. The interested companies are in contact with the experts of my department, and if they submit a definite plan, we shall see what the government can do to help them.

[Mr. Hees.]

As far as I am concerned, I would like to see this important iron ore deposit developed one day. This would allow for the creation of many permanent jobs for the native population of the area.

[English]

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): In view of the fact that seven out of the eleven companies now undertaking development in the Northwest Territories are foreign-owned, would the minister undertake to make a statement to the House on motions before this agreement is finally entered into, giving the House such information as the total amount of government assistance and the companies to which this assistance will be granted?

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Naturally, if the government comes to a decision, we shall make a statement in the House of Commons, but I do not think we can reach a concrete proposal for several months and perhaps a year.

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POLLUTION**MEASURES TO ELIMINATE MERCURY CONTENT IN JAMES AND HUDSON BAYS**

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Is the minister taking concrete measures to check pollution in James and Hudson Bays, which is actually threatening our natural resources?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Here are the facts, Mr. Speaker. The plants polluting James Bay are not located in the Northwest Territories. They are rather to be found in Ontario or Quebec.

We are now conducting studies to determine what the sources of pollution are and we will immediately get in touch with the provincial authorities concerned, in order to make them aware of that problem and ask them to act accordingly.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question.

Is the minister aware that the Domtar plant at Lebel-sur-Quevillon is a source of pollution of the James Bay waters?

Mr. Chrétien: I do not know if it is exactly that plant. It is possible and should that be the case we will advise the proper authorities to take the necessary steps to protect James Bay and its natural resources on which the Eskimos and the Indians of the area depend a great deal for their livelihood.

Mr. André Fortin (Loisbinière): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question.