

Oral Questions

held, subject to the condition that the question was before the courts. These talks have not yet taken place.

Mr. Balfour: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Has the minister been advised through his Washington ambassador or otherwise of the possibility of economic retaliation against Canadian economic interests by the United States in the event that the broadcasting issue is not resolved?

Mr. MacEachen: No, Mr. Speaker, no such view has been conveyed to me.

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THE MINISTRY

DATE OF ANNOUNCEMENT OF APPOINTMENT OF MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the hon. Prime Minister, who knows that I do not ask unreasonable questions or make unreasonable demands upon him. Would the Prime Minister tell the House when we may expect the appointment of a Minister of Communications?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition has made a very reasonable request and I will attempt to satisfy him in the very near future.

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ENERGY

URANIUM—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF EXPORT CONTRACTS—ASSURANCE OF FUTURE SUPPLIES FOR CANADA

Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Since the minister's announcement of yet more uranium export contracts brings the total of low-cost Canadian uranium being sold to foreigners to about one-fifth of Canada's total supply, will the government table specific details of the contracts governing these exports?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, these are commercial contracts entered into between exporters and purchasers abroad. They were screened by the Atomic Energy Control Board to ensure that several particular points in our policy were met; first, that the prices met world prices; second, that this uranium was surplus to Canadian needs and that Canadian policy was fully met; and third, that satisfactory safeguard arrangements would be negotiated.

Mr. Gillies: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister, therefore, give his assurance to the House that these massive commitments in no way jeopardize Canada's future supplies of uranium?

Mr. Gillespie: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

[Mr. MacEachen.]

NATIONAL FILM BOARD

PROPOSAL THAT OPEN COMPETITION WITH BOARD BE PERMITTED—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State. Is the minister planning an amendment to the National Film Board Act which would delete sections 9 and 11, and does he not think that a 30 year monopoly for the National Film Board is enough to establish it and to let it compete openly with the film industry in general?

Hon. James Hugh Faulkner (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I have had these representations made to me by a variety of sources within the industry. I have promised to look into them, but I am not sure that is the remedy.

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY

POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF SALT MINES IN ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELEINE IN VIEW OF SHORTAGE

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

As huge quantities of salt have been discovered in the Îles-de-la-Madeleine, and as there seems to be a shortage of salt in Canada, can the minister tell the House whether steps have been taken to exploit those salt mines and make up for the present shortage of salt in this country?

[English]

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I am not personally aware of any initiative along these lines. May I take the question as notice so I can inquire for the hon. member and reply to him later.

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NORTHERN AFFAIRS

PROPOSED RATE INCREASE BY NORTHERN CANADA POWER COMMISSION—SUGGESTED FREEZE ON PUBLIC UTILITY RATES

Mr. Wally Firth (Northwest Territories): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development a question regarding the Northern Canada Power Commission. On Thursday I asked a similar question and I am sure that today the minister realizes that I am talking about the proposed increase for November, 1976. In view of the fact that wages will not be allowed to increase beyond 10 per cent under the government's anti-inflation program, what steps will the minister take to protect consumers in Yellowknife from this 113 per cent increase; and has the minister considered a freeze or a subsidy on public utility rates until the wage controls are lifted?

Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, after the question