

Oral Questions

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, this motion is in the name of my colleague, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, who would be responsible for any amendment thereto. I am sure the committee will have sufficient work in front of it in dealing with the question contained in the reference, but that certainly would be a matter for debate when the motion is considered by the House.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, could I also have the same answer, if it is the same answer, from the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's suggestion is one that can be considered in the course of the debate on the motion once it is called.

INCLUSION OF REMOVAL OF SALES TAX ON BUILDING
MATERIALS ON AGENDA OF CONFERENCE WITH
PROVINCES

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Will the removal of the 11 per cent sales tax on building materials be a subject on the agenda of the conference the minister has been telling us about which is to be held in order to consult with the provinces?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): The agenda is certainly wide enough to include any such representation that any provincial delegate may wish to make. However, I would caution such delegate that the decision would be made by the Minister of Finance who has the responsibility for tax measures.

Mr. Nesbitt: Who is responsible for making up the agenda for this consultation?

Mr. Basford: I have proposed an agenda to the provincial ministers. Most have indicated that the agenda suggested by me is totally satisfactory and provides a foundation for a complete discussion of housing policy. A few ministers have made a few suggestions which I am happy to accept as to agenda items. When we agree on a final agenda it will be published.

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POST OFFICE

INQUIRY AS TO ACCEPTANCE BY GOVERNMENT OF
CONCILIATION BOARD REPORT ON DISPUTE WITH
POSTAL WORKERS

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board. Now that the postal unions have voted to accept the recommendations of the conciliation board report and have in fact gone back to the negotiating table, is the minister prepared to indicate whether or not the federal government is prepared to accept the conciliation board report?

[Mr. Stevens.]

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with longstanding practice I do not think the hon. member would wish the government, for its side, to disclose what the course of negotiations is or the position being taken. I can say, however, that the negotiations were resumed on Thursday in a constructive and helpful way and are progressing satisfactorily.

Mr. McGrath: I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware of the considerable discontent that has been generated within the postal unions by the failure of the government to respond to the recommendations of the conciliation board report?

Mr. Drury: Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps the responsibility for communicating the general situation to the members of the postal union lies with the negotiating committee. The negotiating committee is, I think, fully aware of the government's position.

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TRADE

STEPS TO FIND ALTERNATIVE MARKETS FOR DAIRY
PRODUCTS FOLLOWING BRITISH ENTRY INTO EUROPEAN
COMMON MARKET

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce or the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the statement by the chairman of the Milk Marketing Board of England and Wales that enlargement of the EEC will virtually eliminate the necessity for dairy imports, could the minister announce to the House at any early date what measures he proposes to take to find alternative markets for dairy products such as cheese, of which 85 per cent of our exports have gone to the United Kingdom?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, my officials have already been in contact with officials of the EEC. We have made representations to them with a view to reaching a satisfactory arrangement.

Mr. Speaker: I believe the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East has a supplementary to a previous question.

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PUBLIC SERVICE

INQUIRY AS TO INTENTION OF GOVERNMENT
CONCERNING BRYDEN REPORT—REQUEST FOR RELEASE

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, could I ask the appropriate minister to give us some indication concerning the government's intention in respect of the Bryden commission report. Can it be released and, if not, why?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, if I may answer that question, a similar question was put during the last parliament. The answer I gave at that time was that the Bryden committee report had been submitted to the government for its advice. It