

Oral Questions

Prince Edward Island. I will be in that province as early as tomorrow and will probably sign the agreement with the premier of P.E.I. on Thursday. As understood during our negotiations, the agreement will cover a five-year period.

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MANPOWER

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I want to put a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

As the President of the Treasury Board said last week that no additional funds would be given for LIP projects and since 75 per cent of those projects will be turned down because of lack of funds, I would like to ask the minister, in the circumstances, in view of the disappointment of hundreds of promoters, whether he is considering recommending additional supplies to the Cabinet, in order to accept a more reasonable number of projects?

[*English*]

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I believe I answered this question the other day. I do not intend, in the face of the current restraint program, to make such a recommendation. The budget of June 23 provided \$450 million for this kind of stimulation involving local initiatives programs, federal labour intensive programs, training and others to be spread over the next 18 months. That is as far as we can go now.

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FISHERIES

POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF FISHING ZONES—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON DISCUSSIONS WITH DR. KISSINGER

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, my question was to be directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In his absence I shall direct it to the Minister of Fisheries. According to reports emanating from 200 delegates at the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council meeting in St. John's, Newfoundland, the Canadian government on its own does not intend to declare a 200-mile limit within the next three years. As President Ford indicated he would be prepared to sign a unilateral declaration establishing the limit, effective January 1, 1977, will the government make available to this House the basis of the discussions recently held on this matter with Dr. Kissinger. We have learned just about everything else which took place at that meeting. Perhaps we could learn what was said about the fisheries.

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of State, Fisheries): Mr. Speaker, the premise of the hon. member's question escapes me completely. We said clearly that unilateral action is still very much an option. I may say to the hon. member that I am surprised that delegates to the meeting in St. John's have not read what the former minister of fisheries for Newfoundland said in a letter to me, that his province, because of our success at ICNAF, is not pressing

[*Mr. Lessard.*]

for action before the next Law of the Sea Conference. The Fisheries Council of Canada has also expressed this view. So, I will take the word of these gentlemen, instead of the word of some academics.

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● (1450)

POST OFFICE

ALLEGATION TAPE RECORDING OF NEGOTIATIONS DISCLOSES GOVERNMENT MIGHT LOCK OUT EMPLOYEES—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF TAPE

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister? It arises from the breaking off of negotiations last night and the indication that a tape was made of that conversation which indicates that the chief negotiator for the government had taken the position that the government was locking out postal employees—whatever that position may mean. Is the Acting Prime Minister aware of the existence of that tape? Would he be prepared to table it in the House, if he is aware of it, and can he tell us if the tape contains a record of the government's position vis-à-vis the postal unions.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I understand—and this is only based on reports I have received—that the tape was made without the authorization of the people who were present. In other words, it was a surreptitious taping. I would think it is the kind of report which should not be published, in the interests of preservation of privacy. May I make this point: So far as the government is concerned, the only point on which the government is absolutely adamant is the question of wages. The same deal has been offered to the inside postal workers as has been offered to the letter carriers and accepted by them. Other matters are open for negotiation and we stand ready to resume negotiations at any time.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I understand the Acting Prime Minister's position, that he is not personally aware of the tape, but is only aware of it through reports. Can he undertake to the House to investigate the existence of that tape. If he can, will he listen to it? Will he undertake to table that tape in the House, so that members of parliament can listen to it and understand the purport of the recorded conversations?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Sharp: No, Mr. Speaker, I would not undertake that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sharp: If the negotiator had authorized the taping and it were part of the official record, I should certainly consider the request. I am surprised that the hon. gentleman should make such a suggestion.