

Energy Control Board, are also looking into it and will soon have a report on the situation.

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, my letter was delivered to the minister's office by hand last Thursday morning. Apart from that, however, the question relates to a public inquiry and an independent investigation. In the last ten years or so, monitoring had taken place by the Atomic Energy Control Board but my request to the minister was for an independent investigation and inquiry beyond that. Has the minister put her mind to that question as yet?

Mrs. Sauv : No, Mr. Speaker, I have not contemplated such action and will not until I get a full report on the situation.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

REQUEST FROM NOVA SCOTIA AND NEWFOUNDLAND FOR CONFERENCE ON UNILATERAL ACTION TO PROTECT MARINE RESOURCES

Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Has the minister received a request from the minister of fisheries for Nova Scotia, Mr. Cameron, and the minister of fisheries for Newfoundland, Mr. Crosbie, that a meeting of the interested provinces be held to discuss marine resources and the possibility of unilateral action to protect those resources? If so, when will such a meeting be held?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have received inquiries from both Mr. Cameron and Mr. Crosbie in reference to an undertaking I made during the Law of the Sea conference that at some point following the Geneva meeting I would convene the delegation as a whole to review the results of the conference and hear further views from those who had attended it. I intend to do that at a mutually convenient time.

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POST OFFICE

AUTOMATION—DISCREPANCY IN COST FIGURES QUOTED BY UNION AND GOVERNMENT—REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE SUBJECT INCLUDED IN CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the Postmaster General? In light of the disagreement that has arisen over the cost of postal automation between CUPW union officials and senior officials within the Post Office, would the minister explain the discrepancy in the figures quoted by both sides?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, I think the appropriate place to do that would be when my estimates are put before the House. The figures quoted by the union include work that has already been completed, work contemplated over the next three or four years and work that has nothing to do with automation. If

Oral Questions

the attitude on the part of the union is consideration of working conditions that were outmoded 30 or 40 years ago, then it is hard to negotiate with them.

Mr. Dinsdale: Mr. Speaker, the question was asked because we have not had a chance to consider the Post Office estimates this year. In view of the fact that these issues are raised as debating points, because of the continuing sensitivity of automation and the statement of the president of the union, Mr. Davidson, that Post Office employees will not be permitted to train in the new Mississauga plant until there is assurance of bargaining on the basis of technological change, could the Postmaster General give a definite assurance that the whole subject of technology and automation is being included in the critical contract negotiations under way?

Mr. Mackasey: Mr. Speaker, the conciliation efforts broke off as of yesterday. We are now moving to the conciliation board process where I think everybody will have ample opportunity to present the case on automation. We are again prepared to guarantee that nobody will be detrimentally affected by automation, a matter that Mr. Davidson does not seem to understand very clearly.

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AGRICULTURE

CANADIAN EGG MARKETING AGENCY—INQUIRY WHETHER ALL PARTIES SIGNED AGREEMENT AND POSSIBILITY OF IMPORT CONTROLS

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the Minister of Agriculture? The CEMA agreement was drawn up some time in April. Can the minister tell the House whether all parties have signed an agreement in principle and if so, can we expect an announcement on the implementation of import controls?

● (1440)

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, all provinces have not signed the agreement; one still has to sign. All producer groups have signed in all ten provinces and I am supposed to talk to the other minister of agriculture who has not signed at three o'clock this afternoon.

Mr. Epp: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister discussed proposed import controls with his counterpart in the United States, and what message has he received from his counterpart about retaliatory action the United States might consider if this program is implemented?

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, as long as proper supply-management policies are in force in a country when it imposes controls, there is no retaliatory action that other countries can take. That is why I want to implement such policies before we impose border controls.