

Inquiries of the Ministry

the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion a question which I have asked on two previous occasions concerning the fact that the position of chairman of the Cape Breton Development Corporation, a position of great importance, is vacant. Is the minister in a position to inform the House as to who the new chairman will be? I find it difficult to believe that it is beyond the capacity of this government to fill this position with a competent person.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I am not in a position to announce that appointment. I hope I can do so shortly. Several people have been approached; however, some refused and others were probably not able to fill the job. As soon as we can appoint somebody, we shall be glad to proceed.

[English]

ALLEGED ILLEGAL USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT
INSURANCE COMMISSION FUND

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion also. I should like to ask if he has received a protest wire from Local 4527 indicating illegal use of the UIC fund by Devco and, if so, what would the nature of his answer be?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I have not received it. I shall check with the departments to ascertain if they received the wire and who received it.

Mr. MacInnis: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister would speak to the authorities who have been quoted on several occasions but to my knowledge have yet to come forth with any decision. Would he look into the question of the legality of the plan put forth by Devco? I think it is a matter of interest to all members of this House that legislation passed by this House has been used as a back-door method to violate existing contracts.

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): A short supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the Minister of Labour if he received a wire with reference to this particular problem of unemployment insurance?

[Mr. Stanfield.]

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour): Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker. It is possible that the Unemployment Insurance Commission received such a wire. Indeed, I think members will recall the fact that, contrary to the opinion expressed, the procedure is a legal one not unique to Devco; there are 100-odd such arrangements. The Unemployment Insurance Commission and the then Minister of Manpower got together to do what they thought was in the best interests of workers and miners. As a result of that action, many people who would have been prematurely out of work with no income are at least guaranteed a substantial income.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any legal opinion because I have already asked for such an opinion from the law officers of the Crown. I ask the Minister of Labour if he does not consider that the fact a man, who is released from his position is forced to use the UIC fund to pay for his retirement, is a violation of the insurance fund?

Mr. Speaker: I would think that the question as asked would invite an expression of opinion by the minister and, therefore, the question is not phrased properly.

Mr. MacInnis: The Minister of Labour has tried to imply that a legal opinion has been given, but that is not the case because I have put the question to both law officers of the Crown, the Solicitor General and the Minister of Justice. I put it to them verbally and in writing some time last September, but as yet neither one of those law officers has expressed an opinion. Therefore the Minister of Labour is not in a position to state what the law officers of the Crown have said on this matter.

PESTICIDES

FAO RECOMMENDATIONS RESPECTING
RESIDUE TOLERANCE IN FOOD

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the important two-week December meeting in Rome of pesticide experts from the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization on the evaluation of the hazard to man of pesticide residues in food, have the recommendations arising from the meeting on residue tolerance for use in regulating residues in food moving in commerce been received by