

per cent bonus will be granted to bilingual civil servants before the languages bill is discussed in the house.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the bill in question has nothing to do with the 7 per cent bonus. Therefore, I do not see the connection between the two matters as implied by the hon. member.

[English]

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AMHERST, N.S.—POSSIBLE CLOSING OF MARITIMES OPERATION

Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland-Colchester North): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. Is the department giving consideration to closing out its maritime operations that are located at Amherst, Nova Scotia?

Mr. Speaker: I doubt whether this is a question that can be asked at this time. The hon. member may wish to have the matter debated at the time of adjournment.

Mr. Coates: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, this is a very urgent matter so far as I am concerned. It is one that involves all three maritime provinces because the operations that are located at Amherst are involved in the plans that have been produced by the federal government to carry out its work in the Atlantic provinces.

Mr. Speaker: I understand the argument submitted by the hon. member, but I still feel that it is the type of situation that can best be discussed at the time of adjournment.

AGRICULTURE

POTATOES—STABILIZATION OF P.E.I. INDUSTRY

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Acting Minister of Agriculture. Can he assure the house that the government will approve some plan at a very early date to stabilize the potato industry in Prince Edward Island, as requested by a resolution of the legislature of that province?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Acting Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to bring this question to the attention of the minister on his return.

Inquiries of the Ministry

INDUSTRY

DEVCO—COMPULSORY RETIREMENT OF MINERS—TREASURY BOARD APPROVAL

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion if he can inform the house whether there was a by-law of Devco about compulsory early retirement of employees, and whether that by-law was approved by Treasury Board yesterday, as was suggested by the minister the other day?

Mr. Russell C. Honey (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the hon. member there was such a by-law enacted in accordance with the statute and that approval was given yesterday by the Treasury Board.

Mr. Lewis: As a supplementary question, if the approval for this plan was given only yesterday would the parliamentary secretary inform the house, if he has the information now, or undertake to obtain it, under what authority the corporation sent notices to the employees some weeks ago telling them that they were subject to this compulsory retirement, when the by-law had not been before the Treasury Board and approved?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have the impression that the hon. member is asking for a legal interpretation.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape-Breton-East Richmond): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for York South is not asking for a legal interpretation. It is just a follow-up to a statement made by the parliamentary secretary last night in respect of information sent to the retiring employees, and I might say, Mr. Speaker, in this respect—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member now seems to be presenting an argument. This is not a point of order. He may have a supplementary question and I have no objection to that.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I will put a supplementary question to the Prime Minister. Will he request the crown company to withdraw the compulsory aspect of its pre-retirement leave plan? Mr. Speaker, I will put a separate question to the Prime Minister. Does he support this form of discrimination?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.