

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, August 21, 1958

The house met at eleven o'clock.

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Thirteenth report of standing committee on miscellaneous private bills.—Mr. McCleave.

Eleventh report of standing committee on railways, canals and telegraph lines.—Mr. Fraser.

ATOMIC ENERGY

NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS—REPORTED AGREEMENT ON MEANS OF DETECTION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether he can inform the house if reports are accurate that the conference of atomic scientists at Geneva has reached agreement on practicable international machinery for the detection of nuclear explosions, thereby making possible effective international arrangements prohibiting such explosions for the testing of nuclear weapons, something which I think we all agree is both desirable and urgent.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): The scientific experts in Geneva, Mr. Speaker, as has been reported in the press and as is known to the Leader of the Opposition, have arrived at agreed conclusions. However, these decisions have not yet become part of the public domain and will not until the experts agree upon their final report. Dr. Solandt, the representative for Canada, will be returning in the next day or so and he will then report to the government. For that reason I would prefer not to deal with this matter at the present time, except to say that having regard to the general situation and the considerations that have been determined by the experts, my hope is that there will be an eventual international agreement on the suspension of nuclear tests. I couple with that the hope that it will be at a reasonably early date.

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): I have a supplementary question I should like to ask the Prime Minister arising out of the very welcome report of agreement among scientists as to how atomic explosions can be detected and prevented. Is the Prime Minister able to comment on the news report that the

United States is about to announce or has announced a temporary suspension of its own nuclear tests? This report was on television last night.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Of course the hon. gentleman will realize that such announcements could not be made by way of anticipation in the House of Commons.

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

INQUIRY AS TO LOCATION OF HEADQUARTERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Grant Campbell (Stormont): Would the Minister of Transport care to comment on an article which appeared in last night's *Ottawa Journal* to the effect that the St. Lawrence seaway headquarters will remain in Ottawa?

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): Yes, Mr. Speaker. I wish to thank the hon. member for indicating his intention to ask this question. I got in touch with the president of the authority and he has advised me as follows. The St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act provides that the head office of the authority shall be at Ottawa or in such other place in Canada as the governor in council may designate. On inception of the authority, head office was set up at Ottawa and so-called "headquarters" at Montreal.

In reply to a recent inquiry from the press, the president of the authority indicated that approximately 125 employees would be moved to Cornwall as circumstances permit and as the construction phase ends and the operating stage is reached. The staff at Montreal consists of the engineering personnel and the administrative employees recruited for the construction period. The authority has determined that it would be disruptive and uneconomical to move the engineering and allied staffs until construction is practically completed.

The number of employees mentioned, namely about 125, is a preliminary figure based upon proposed establishments. It is considerably less than the 200 to 300 mentioned some years ago, but that figure was not based upon a detailed study of the organization required.

From inquiries which have been made, particularly by employees who have in view moving to Cornwall, it appears doubtful that