

opinion as to whether the parties involved and responsible should be prosecuted.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will look into the matter. I have some cause to be sceptical about the question as stated by the hon. member.

Mr. Bawden: In view of the fact that the Minister of Finance was in charge of the area which governed the National Energy Board at the time of the fraudulent conversion, will the Prime Minister say whether he will take steps to ensure that when looking into this matter it will be on an impartial basis, and will he assure the House that the facts which come out are brought before the House so that the House can judge how this was conducted?

Mr. Trudeau: As the hon. member knows, the matter was referred yesterday to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and whatever facts he wants to ascertain he can do so at that committee.

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URBAN AFFAIRS

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS— ATTITUDE OF VANCOUVER

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Was the minister able to persuade the mayor and council of Vancouver to agree that the United Nations conference on Human Settlements should go on as planned?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I did not attempt to persuade the council. I thought that would be presumptuous for a federal minister. I pointed out that we respected their views on a moral issue, and indeed, shared many of them, but we gave our reasons for not being able to accede to their request. I understand, however—and this is on hearsay—that last night the council reversed its decision and now is welcoming the conference, as is the community as a whole.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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POST OFFICE

INQUIRY WHETHER POSTMASTER GENERAL INFORMED OF ANTI-INFLATION BOARD DECISION—POSSIBLE APPEARANCE OF POSTMASTER GENERAL BEFORE BOARD

Mr. Bill Clarke (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Postmaster General in the hope of clarifying some of the information which has been floating around today: first, that the Anti-Inflation Board has been in contact with the union; second, that the Prime Minister said there had been contact between the Anti-Inflation Board and some members of the cabinet; and third, that the Anti-Inflation Board said earlier today that it would be making an announcement later today. The Postmaster General in his earlier response hid behind the word "official". In view of these alleged facts I ask the

Oral Questions

Postmaster General if there has been any contact between the Anti-Inflation Board and himself, and if so, what was the information imparted?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, there has been absolutely no contact, officially or unofficially, between myself and the Anti-Inflation Board. I repeat what I have said all month, and that is that I would be pleased to appear before that board, if it were found necessary by the board, to help clarify certain portions or parts of the collective agreement which the board may feel needs clarifying, particularly on behalf of the labour movement. I think that is precisely what I said in an earlier response to the right hon. gentleman.

Mr. Stanfield: Just honourable.

Mr. Mackasey: The hon. member can read what he wants into it. I am unaware of any official statement by the Anti-Inflation Board. I simply indicated that there were other duties and suggested that they have a lot to keep themselves busy with.

Mr. Clarke (Vancouver Quadra): In view of the remarks of the Postmaster General just now, I should like to ask if he has made an official offer of an official request to appear before the Anti-Inflation Board.

Mr. Mackasey: No, Mr. Speaker, for the very simple reason that as the hon. gentleman knows—or as I just tried to tell him—there has been no communication, officially or unofficially, between myself and the board. To the best of my knowledge there is no official statement by the Anti-Inflation Board. Perhaps that is why it is having a press conference later in the day. These questions are all based on speculative stories which have been appearing in the press. I simply repeat what I have been saying all along, that I offered officially, with regard to this collective agreement, to appear before that board and to help clarify any areas of ambiguity which the board feels may or could result in a negative reaction to the settlement.

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GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF DEPARTMENTS IN MONTREAL— REQUEST THAT ATLANTIC PROVINCES BE GIVEN CONSIDERATION

Mr. Leonard C. Jones (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Prime Minister. Is there any truth to the report that certain federal departments are to be relocated from Ottawa, the nation's capital, to Montreal?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I know of no department moving to Montreal but the hon. member knows that it is part of the policy of the government to decentralize the administration of the government to various regions of the country so far as possible. That is the reason for instance, that certain services of the Department of Supply and Services were established in the riding of the hon. member for Matane some months ago. That is why the Mint has been decentralized to Win-