

Oral Questions

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think I told the hon. member that while the safeguards or Canadian standards that are being proposed are the strictest, the actual bilateral negotiation with South Korea has not yet been completed. That is my recollection. When the negotiation is completed and the treaty concluded, I will be glad to consider the hon. member's representation.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the non-proliferation treaty is not a sufficient safeguard in that any signatory may opt out on giving three-month's notice, is the minister requiring South Korea to agree to a periodic inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency, and has that organization agreed to accept this responsibility?

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will in the normal course have the inspection carried out by the international agency, and it is my expectation that the agency will carry out these inspections. In any event, in the absence of international inspections, which we fully expect to take place, we would contemplate bilateral inspections.

SALE OF REACTORS TO SOUTH KOREA AND ARGENTINA—
CONSIDERATION OF STABILITY OF GOVERNMENTS PRIOR TO
SALE

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I ask if final negotiations have been completed with the government of Argentina regarding a nuclear reactor and if, in considering this matter of selling nuclear reactors to South Korea and Argentina, the government gives careful attention to the stability of those countries and the inherent danger providing them with nuclear potential may have in provoking their neighbouring countries into also seeking to have a nuclear capacity? In other words, I am asking the minister if we are interested primarily in promoting peace rather than in selling nuclear reactors?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we are primarily interested in both, and that is why we, in undertaking these sales, go to very great lengths and take great pains to establish the most adequate safeguard system available. With regard to the specific question dealing with Argentina, we have not yet completed our bilateral negotiations as there are still a number of points outstanding about the safeguards themselves. We are pursuing these at the present time.

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[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT ACT

INQUIRY AS TO POSSIBLE REVISION

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the President of the Privy Council.

Since the Public Service Commission has often suggested that after eight years of application the Public Service

[Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

Employment Act should be revised, and since such a revision has also been supported by the Public Service bargaining agents and by the Treasury Board representative, can the minister tell the House if the government intends to follow up these suggestions, and can we expect that the government will soon announce the procedures or methods that will be used to proceed with such a revision?

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the government has had the Public Service Employment Act under revision from time to time. At the time of the last review it was concluded that this subject could not be finally dealt with until the Public Service Staff Relation Act had been revised. That Act is now being studied by the standing committee and it has already made one report. I hope it will make its final report on that Act soon. I should like to assure the hon. gentleman that the government has this question under active consideration but is awaiting the introduction of legislation to deal with the Public Service Staff Relations Act, which we think is a necessary preliminary.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ALLEGED INTERFERENCE WITH TELEPHONE CALLS BY
SOVIET AUTHORITIES—SUGGESTED PROTEST

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and has to do with international agreements between various nations to the effect that there should be an uninterrupted exchange of international telecommunications. That particular convention is 30 years old and it has been generally followed by all countries except in recent months by the U.S.S.R. In recent days and weeks, the Soviet authorities have begun a policy of obstructing and interfering with telephone calls, culminating in a blackout. This practice has grown during the months until today it is impossible, I am informed by both Ukrainian and Jewish organizations, to get telephone calls through at all as they are blocked as soon as they are placed. I mention this as a representation at the request of the Canadian Jewish Congress that action be taken, and also for Ukrainian organizations, in particular the Committee for the Defence of Valentyn Moroz, which committee was successful over a period of six months in maintaining—

Some hon. Members: Order, order!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Will the right hon. member put his question.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to get an answer to a question unless they know what it is.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: The government has had this matter brought to its attention and, in the interests of preservation of international relations and, in particular, the responsibilities of all nations to uphold the convention, I