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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

DISCUSSION WITH UNITED STATES ON USE OF BUILDINGS AT ARGENTIA NAVAL STATION

Mr. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The minister will recall that the United States forces moved out of the north side of the Argentina naval station several years ago, leaving vacant various buildings and facilities having potential for industrial development in the area. They imposed a stipulation that they can reclaim these with 30 days notice, preventing any development. Has the minister had any discussions with the United States authorities on this in an attempt to get that condition changed? If so, when will those discussions be concluded? When will there be an announcement of some change or is there likely to be a change in that stipulation?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the discussions are certainly taking place, in fact as recently as three weeks ago. That is why I can respond by saying I was encouraged by the results of those discussions and expect to get some word soon from the United States authorities. However, I have no idea as to the specific date or time when I will hear from them.

GARRISON DIVERSION—REASON FOR GRANTING INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION ADDITIONAL TIME TO MAKE REPORT

Mr. Dean Whiteway (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the same minister. It has to do with the Garrison diversion project and the recent diplomatic note sent by Canada to the United States asking for a moratorium on construction. On what fact did the government base its decision in August to allow the IJC an extension of eight months for its final report, a decision that was made after the subcommittee on appropriations and after the President of the United States signed \$23.5 million for next year's construction? What facts led the government to agree to an extension with the knowledge that next year's construction funds had already been appropriated?

Mr. Speaker: With due respect, I am sure the hon. member will realize that is a matter not to be pursued here in that manner but before the committee.

Oral Questions

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

INCREASE IN ITEMS FOR PURCHASE, REPAIR AND UPKEEP—POSSIBLE MEANS OF SECURING ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Treasury Board. Given the fact that the purchase, repair and upkeep category of spending has increases averaging 16 per cent proposed in the Supplementary Estimates (B), and having regard for the phenomenal increases experienced in purchase, repair and upkeep for 1975-76 over 1974-75 averaging a staggering 450 per cent, most of which was also put through by the use of mid-year supplementary estimates, can the minister advise the House whether this was a legitimate mid-year breakdown in various departments of government or whether this route is being used as an illegitimate way of securing funds for additional government expenditures within the departments?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, it is certainly my impression that it is a totally legitimate method. I will be glad to go into detail or have somebody do that when those supplementary estimates are before the appropriate committee for full examination.

Mr. Mazankowski: If the minister considers an increase of 450 per cent in this category to be legitimate, is he reviewing the guidelines and perhaps recommending to the departments that they buy machinery which is less prone to breakdown? Is he investigating the manner in which this appropriation is taking place? In particular, can the minister advise why this category for the Anti-Inflation Board has increased 460 per cent in this year's Supplementary Estimates (B)?

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member usually asks the question, have you stopped beating your wife. I will give a detailed answer so it will be precisely on the record when I appear or when that item appears before the committee.

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FOREIGN INVESTMENT

POSSIBLE DISCUSSION OF TARIFF ON APPLIANCES DURING NEGOTIATIONS FOR ACQUISITION OF WESTINGHOUSE APPLIANCE DIVISION

Mr. Bill Kempling (Halton-Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In the negotiations on the merger of Canadian General Electric and General Steel Wares and the proposed acquisition of the Westinghouse appliance division announced last Wednesday, was there any discussion regarding tariffs on imported appliances with CGE and GSW?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the question of tariffs as they apply to household appliances was not brought up during the negotiations I have had with the people concerned.