

Oral Questions

Opposition but by the provinces—that we do not contemplate invoking this power.

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[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

POLICY CONCERNING OFFSHORE RESOURCES

Mr. Alexandre Cyr (Gaspé): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. When the Law of the Sea Conference held its ninth session in New York last August, this government's lack of interest was deeply regretted, because there was not a single minister present. An important subject of major significance for Canada is the development of offshore mineral resources. In 1978, the Canadian delegation proposed a ceiling on the production of nickel extracted from offshore nodules. It seemed possible to have this production ceiling formula accepted, but some consumer countries like Japan and those in Europe will no longer accept it.

Could the hon. minister advise the House about the diplomatic steps she will take with those countries to make sure that they accept the Canadian formula concerning the ceiling on the development of offshore resources, in order to protect the mining industry in Canada and prevent the closing of nickel mining operations in Sudbury and copper mining operations in the Gaspé region?

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, this government attaches the utmost importance to the successful conclusion of the Law of the Sea Conference next year. My colleagues and I met the Canadian delegation both before and immediately after the last session. Concerning the ceiling to be put on the production of nickel, I must say that Canada continues to defend its interests and to exert pressures on other countries. In this connection, I have personally raised this question with the American Secretary of State, Mr. Vance, with the members of the European Economic Community and with other foreign affairs ministers.

INQUIRY WHETHER PRIME MINISTER WILL DISCUSS
EXPLORATION OF OFFSHORE MINERALS WITH PRESIDENT
CARTER

Mr. Alexandre Cyr (Gaspé): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the present state of our mining industry, does the Prime Minister intend to add this matter of overmining of offshore nodules to the agenda of his conference with President Carter?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, this is a matter I would be willing to take up with the Secretary of State for External Affairs and, if it appears in the interest of

[Mr. Clark.]

our country that I should discuss it with President Carter, I would certainly be willing to do so.

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● (1450)

[English]

INDIAN AFFAIRSREQUEST FOR INQUIRY INTO POLICE KILLING OF
CAUGHNAWAGAN

Mr. Ian Watson (Châteauguay): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and it relates to the inexcusable police killing of a Caughnawaga resident last weekend.

Does the minister intend to ask the Solicitor General to launch an independent inquiry into this disgraceful episode; or do the minister and his colleague, the Solicitor General, intend to request the establishment of a joint inquiry into this sorry affair by representatives of their ministries as well as appropriate representatives from Quebec?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to the hon. member and to members of the House that I sent my condolences to the bereaved family following the incident. A coroner has been appointed, Mr. Cyrille Delage, for the purpose of having a full inquest. We have been in contact with the chief of Caughnawaga, and we are trying to clear my schedule so that I can go down there on Monday or Tuesday not only to discuss the police issue but other issues.

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[Translation]

AGRICULTURECORN DRYING—REQUEST FOR INQUIRY INTO CAUSE OF
PROPANE SHORTAGE

Mr. Marcel Ostiguy (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Since this is harvest time for grain farmers, and since they must use dryers and there is a shortage of propane gas, can the Minister of Agriculture order an immediate inquiry to ascertain the cause of this shortage of gas which is harming Quebec farmers?

[English]

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's interest. I must confess, in all honesty, that I am not aware of the fact that this situation exists. If the hon. member wishes to share some information with me, I can give him a commitment that I will consult with my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, and will do everything possible to overcome the shortage, if indeed that shortage does exist.