

inquire today and report on the progress to the hon. member tomorrow.

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CANADA LABOUR RELATIONS COUNCIL

VIEW OF COUNCIL ON SINGLE SECTOR BARGAINING FOR PUBLIC SERVICE—REQUEST FOR REPORT

Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. Because of the fact that the first meetings by the Canada Labour Relations Council are now over, and in view of the concern of the minister about the existing fragmentation of union power within the public sectors of the economy and his objective to reduce the number of bargaining points within these sectors, can the minister indicate whether the concept of single sector bargaining was discussed at these meetings? What was the general consensus of such a concept, and when can Canadians expect a reduction of bargaining points within the public sector to take place in order to reduce the number of strikes threatening in the entire economy?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, in his question the hon. member has covered many areas. I will say yes, the question of reducing the number of bargaining points was discussed; and yes, the question of industry wide bargaining was discussed. The council decided that both were perhaps desirable objectives, and it agreed to form panels of management—or the business side—labour and representatives from government. They would meet over the course of the next two or three months and again in October, hopefully with some definite recommendations along these lines. In view of the summer and their readiness to meet right away and come up with these recommendations, I think that is moving quite quickly.

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PENITENTIARIES

BRITISH COLUMBIA—GOVERNMENT POSITION ON DEMAND FOR UNION FOR CONVICTS

Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley): Mr. Speaker, while on the subject of walkouts I would like to put my supplementary question to the Solicitor General. In view of the work stoppages by striking prisoners at the British Columbia penitentiary, who are demanding the acceptance of unions for convicts, can the minister advise this House what steps he is taking or has taken to bring this absurd situation to an end in order to prevent other similar institutions from following this unfortunate and incredible precedent?

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, the inmates at B.C. Penitentiary sent a message to the Commissioner of Penitentiaries asking that he go out to B.C. to discuss with them the possibility of forming a union for inmates. The Commissioner of Penitentiaries sent back a message that this was completely unacceptable

Oral Questions

and that he would not be willing to discuss it with them in B.C. or anywhere else in Canada.

● (1440)

Mr. Jelinek: A supplementary question. In view of the fact that the sitdown strike is continuing and in view of the government's inaction, can it be surmised that the government intends to follow the course that these criminals are suggesting and make it government policy to allow convicts the right to strike that many honest Canadians do not share?

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, I think it was fairly clear from my answer that this is completely unacceptable. I might say the inmates are all in their cells.

An hon. Member: Thank God!

Mr. Allmand: They have not left their cells since this started. With respect to working, I might point out that not all these inmates are working—at any time—and the work is not the type of work that is done on the outside.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SALE OF CANDU REACTOR TO ARGENTINA—REASON FOR ALLOWING ATOMIC ENERGY OF CANADA TO CONTINUE WORK ON CONSTRUCTION OF REACTOR

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Last week I put some questions to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and he suggested they should be directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

When did the minister first know that Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, a Canadian government agency, had undertaken and was proceeding with the task of supervising the building of a nuclear reactor in Argentina? Did the minister or the Canadian government authorize AECL to undertake this task and in view of the fact that the government was negotiating, as I understand it—negotiations have not been completed—was negotiating for more satisfactory safeguards, why did the minister or the government not require AECL to stop making this particular contribution to the building of a reactor in Argentina?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, no doubt the hon. gentleman's questions last week were motivated by a misleading report in the *Toronto Star*. The report suggested that AECL had carried out the negotiation of its contract in Argentina without cabinet consent and, it also suggested, without the participation of the Department of External Affairs. Both assertions are mistaken. AECL at each stage in the proceedings, from the cabinet authorization of May 23, 1972, to submitting a proposal to tender which had been invited by the Argentine utility, up to and including the confirmation of the contract on December 20, 1973, acted with authority from cabinet, and the Department of External Affairs both here in Ottawa and through the Canadian Embassy in Buenos Aires had been involved in the negotiation of the contract.