

further delay in setting up the important international conference at Santiago, Chile, in 1974, would the minister indicate what further steps Canada is taking to obtain agreement among those countries which to date have refused to accept the principle that a coastal state should have the right to manage the fishing resources on its continental shelf and slope?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am not as pessimistic as the hon. gentleman about the prospects of the Law of the Sea Conference. I fully expect that it will be held on the dates that have been fixed in 1974—

[*Editor's Note: Whereupon proceedings were interrupted by a stranger attempting to enter upon the floor of the House.*]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. May we have order, please. I believe the Secretary of State for External Affairs was attempting to reply to the hon. member's question.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think hon. members should give the minister an opportunity to reply to the question that was asked.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure whether my answer was heard by the members of the press who were still in the gallery at the time but perhaps I might repeat it. As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, I am not as pessimistic as the hon. gentleman about the prospects of holding the Law of the Sea Conference on the scheduled dates. There is difficulty about the agenda, but I can assure him that Canada will continue to support the right of coastal states to manage resources off shore for a considerable distance.

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FOOD PRICES

APPROPRIATENESS OF SALARY OF CHAIRMAN OF REVIEW BOARD

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister and/or the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In view of the difficulties faced by members of the public service who earn lower salaries in Ottawa and elsewhere and also the people on fixed incomes, is it the view of the Prime Minister that the appointment of a \$40,000 a year chairman of the Food Prices Review Board is the way to lead to lower food prices in this country?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think the importance of the job and the competence of the person required to fill it necessitates an appropriate salary. In view of the total amount spent by Canadians generally for food, if the board is able, as I think it will be, to make a contribution to the stabilization of food prices through its recommendations, the expenditure will be well worth while.

Oral Questions

An hon. Member: What about the other housewives? Can they manage?

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TRANSPORT

AWARDING OF CONTRACT FOR WAREHOUSING AND CRANE OPERATION ON SURREY-FRASER DOCKS TO JOHNSON TERMINAL COMPANY WITHOUT BIDS

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport and it concerns the awarding of a contract for warehousing and the operation of the cranes, according to a recent announcement, on the Surrey-Fraser docks. Would the minister explain to the House why that award was made to the Johnson Terminal Company without any competitive building and without any kind of invitation to competing firms to make proposals?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think a question of this kind should be placed on the order paper. If there is urgency it could be considered at the time of the adjournment when the hon. member can ask his question.

Mr. Leggatt: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that he cannot ask a supplementary to a question that is out of order. Perhaps the hon. member might like to rephrase his question, after which the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Bellechasse.

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NATIONAL REVENUE

REQUEST THAT CONTRACT FOR POSSIBLE SUFFERANCE WAREHOUSE IN VANCOUVER NOT BE AWARDED WITHOUT COMPETITIVE BIDS

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, the rephrased question is now directed basically to the Minister of National Revenue. In view of the fact that the same firm is in line for the award of a contract for a sufferance warehouse in the lower mainland, will the minister assure the House that the award of that contract will not be made without competitive bidding or without an invitation to competing firms when the award is made?

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, there is no firm "in line" for a licence for a truck sufferance warehouse in Vancouver as there is no present intention of issuing any further such licence. When the time comes, as it may well do, for an additional licence to be issued, I certainly hope that there will be an opportunity for any interested firms to submit suggestions, but the term "tendering" I do not think is quite appropriate when nothing is being purchased.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Bellechasse.