

Oral Questions

any province has asked that the matter of the cost of living be placed on the agenda?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, until the agenda is agreed to it would be uncustomary for me to say what it contains. I will gladly make the agenda public as soon as it has been agreed to. Therefore I cannot answer in detail the first part of the question. On the latter part, I would say I have requested that exchanges be made between the provinces and our government to ensure that we can discuss economic questions, and each participant will, of course, be able to interpret that in the light he wishes.

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FOOD PRICES

INQUIRY AS TO ANNOUNCEMENT OF PERSONNEL OF REVIEW BOARD

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a further supplementary of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In view of the fact the minister has already asked, I am informed, for nominations for the Food Prices Review Board and has received nominations from at least one source, will there be any further delay in announcing the personnel of that board or may we expect an announcement soon?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I hope there can be an announcement very soon, Mr. Speaker.

[Later:]

Mr. Speaker: I believe the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway has a supplementary to the question asked a moment ago.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs whether, in picking the personnel for the Food Prices Review Board, he can give us the assurance that consumers, particularly those of low income, will be represented on the board?

Mr. Gray: Mr. Speaker, among the types of people we are considering are people in that category.

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[Translation]

COMMUNICATIONS

BELL CANADA RATE INCREASES—GOVERNMENT DECISION ON TRANSPORT COMMISSION ORDER

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a question of the hon. Minister of Communications.

Could he tell the House whether it is possible that a decision on the Bell Canada rate increases be reached before the end of the 90 day period provided for on April 6?

[Mr. Lewis.]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Minister of Communications): I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. I was absent-minded and did not hear the question.

Mr. Matte: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, that I had to wake up the hon. minister. There seems to be bad communications and, therefore, I repeat my question.

Is it possible that the hon. minister will reach a decision on the Bell Canada rate increases before the end of the 90 days provided for last April 6?

Mr. Pelletier (Hochelaga): It is not impossible, Mr. Speaker.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PROPOSED LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE—DATE AND PLACE OF PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS AND CONFERENCE

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the importance to Atlantic Canada of the Law of the Sea Conference, would the minister indicate whether a place and a date have been finalized for preliminary discussions this fall among the nations concerned, and whether the final conference will still be held next year in Santiago, Chile?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting to discuss the organization of the conference before the end of the year. Present plans are to proceed to have the full conference in Santiago on the dates that have already been indicated.

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AGRICULTURE

DANGER OF GRASSHOPPER INFESTATION IN PRAIRIE PROVINCES—AVAILABILITY OF CHEMICALS TO DESTROY PESTS

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture and has to do with the report of Statistics Canada regarding the danger of a grasshopper infestation this year in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba being greater than over a period of ten years. In view of the fact that about 80 per cent of the increase in the areas infested is expected in Saskatchewan, will the minister do what he can to assure the availability of the necessary chemicals to destroy this pest in advance this year when we expect large production and markets? This is a very serious matter.

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the report. I was in Saskatchewan last Thursday and Friday and visited the Minister of Agriculture of Saskatchewan and talked with our officials there. We receive weekly reports on this condition. We are attempting to make sure we do everything humanly and physically possible to control this infestation, particularly