

Inquiries of the Ministry

yesterday in the absence of the minister directly concerned, and he was unable to answer it. In view of the serious housing situation I think it is appropriate to put the question to the Minister of Labour himself on his return today.

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): This is substantially the same question that was put and answered by me the day before yesterday.

TRADE**POSSIBLE FORMATION OF TRANSATLANTIC COMMON MARKET**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (Queens-Lunenburg): I wish to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister in his capacity as minister of external affairs. In view of the announcement by Mr. Douglas Jay, president of the Board of Trade in the United Kingdom government, that the formation of a transatlantic common market including Britain, Canada and the United States is being studied in both government and private circles, has the minister any comment to make on the position to be adopted by Canada toward a wider area of free trade between Britain and North America?

Hon. Paul Martin (Acting Prime Minister): As is generally known, the Prime Minister has emphasized the importance we on this side of the house attach to the development of a strong Atlantic community. As to any comments I might be invited to make on what Mr. Jay has said, these will have to wait until I have had an opportunity to see what, in fact, Mr. Jay did say.

Mr. Crouse: Will there be a joint meeting of key cabinet ministers of the British and Canadian governments in London in April to study this question of a transatlantic common market?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I do not want to anticipate the details of the formal announcement, but discussions have been under way for the purpose of establishing with Britain the same modalities that exist between Canada and the United States and Canada and Japan for joint ministerial meetings. There is to be a meeting some time before the end of April when ministers of the Canadian and British governments will discuss foreign affairs, Commonwealth matters, and trade and economic matters.

[Mr. Graftey.]

[Later:]

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister related to the questions asked by the hon. member for Queens-Lunenburg. If a meeting is held of cabinet ministers of the various countries involved, something we hope will take place, to discuss the question of an Atlantic free trade association, will the hon. gentleman in his present capacity, and with the special knowledge he has as the hon. member for Essex East, make sure that such reprehensible agreements as the Canada-United States automobile trade pact will be outlawed from the discussions?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am unable to determine whether the question is directed to the minister in his capacity as Acting Prime Minister, as Secretary of State for External Affairs or as the hon. member for Essex East. However, the question appears to be out of order.

LABOUR RELATIONS**STATUS OF DISPUTE BETWEEN UPI AND WIRE SERVICE GUILD**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Barry Mather (New Westminster): I have a question I wish to address to either the Acting Prime Minister or the Minister of Labour. Yesterday on orders of the day the Acting Prime Minister indicated in the absence of the Minister of Labour that he would look immediately into the strike which is threatened between United Press International and the wire service guild at midnight tonight. Could the minister tell us what the position is at the present time?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, in this dispute a conciliation officer was appointed several months ago, and on his suggestion a conciliation board was established. The conciliation board which, of course, included a member representative of the employees, unanimously recommended that negotiations should continue. The negotiations did continue. When they broke off a request was made, yesterday, that a mediator should be appointed. Immediately one of the senior officers in my department, our senior official in Montreal in fact, was assigned to the task. The parties are negotiating and the deadline for the strike has been extended.