

[English]

## LABOUR RELATIONS

### B.C. TELEPHONE COMPANY DISPUTE—POSSIBLE TERMS OF SETTLEMENT

**Mr. Sid Parker (Kootenay East-Revelstoke):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. Would the minister be prepared to confirm that the B.C. Telephone Company has absolutely refused to sign an agreement worked out by his mediator, accepted by both sides, until such time as it receives a second increase from the CRTC? If this is correct, can the minister tell this House precisely what action he intends to take in order to ensure that the people of Canada are not blackmailed by these multinational corporations?

**Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of Labour):** Madam Speaker, the factual situation is not exactly as outlined by the hon. member, but it is nearly as bizarre.

Our very able mediator, Bill Kelly, sent a telegram to me yesterday in which he indicated that after his mediation he had brought about an offer by the company, the substance of which was accepted in totality by the union. In effect, all differences between the parties have been resolved on clauses within the agreement.

● (1450)

However, the company's proposal contains the following preamble:

This proposal is made on the basis that it will not be implemented until a sufficient rate increase is approved by the CRTC to cover the additional costs.

I only want to say that, as Mr. Kelly reported in his document, such increases are totally outside the field of labour relations or of my department, or of the government, or of the parties. I am not aware, in my experience in industrial relations, of any occasion in history in which any of the many utilities that are subject to regulation in this country ever before sought to put such a provision in a collective agreement. I think it is unfortunate. I can only say, in relation to what action can be taken at this moment, that Mr. Kelly has mediated to the point and that there is agreement on the clauses of the agreement and the terms, except for this preamble. One can hope that upon reflection the company will recognize the impossibility of any union accepting the particular clause they propose, though I have had a lengthy discussion on the telephone with Mr. MacFarlane—

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Regan:**—and I was unable to notice much progress in that regard.

**Madam Speaker:** I know the minister has a lot of important things to say, but perhaps he will say them more concisely.

**Mr. Parker:** Madam Speaker, it is precisely what I said, that we are being blackmailed. What I would like to ask the minister, since his words do not seem to be strong enough is this: will the minister recommend to his cabinet colleagues that

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they use their statutory power to roll back the CRTC's increase recommendation until such time as this company is prepared to sign a contract with its workers?

**Mr. Regan:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member probably is aware that there can only be a review of the CRTC increase recently given to the B.C. Telephone Company if an appeal is registered within whatever is the appropriate time period. As I understand the situation, that appeal process is open to various citizens and organizations. However, I think that the productive course of action is for the company to accept the fact that, since they have been able to agree on terms, they should sign the agreement and then make whatever application they consider is appropriate, which is perfectly their right.

I had started to say that I spoke to the president on the telephone, and I was unable to make much progress with Mr. MacFarlane in that regard.

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## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

### CANADIAN POLICY WITH RESPECT TO EL SALVADOR

**Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo):** Madam Speaker, my question is to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The minister will know that yesterday press reports out of Washington confirmed the U.S. congressional support for increased military aid to the government of El Salvador, and also said that U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman, Senator Percy, "will not rule out the use of U.S. troops in El Salvador."

Bearing in mind Canada's support for the United Nations declaration regarding non-intervention in El Salvador, and the representations the minister has had from the people of El Salvador, will the minister tell the House about his conversation with General Haig in Washington that gave him "reason to pause" in pursuing Canada's foreign policy toward El Salvador? Is the government now supporting a military solution to that tragic conflict?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, there has been no change with respect to Canada's policy concerning El Salvador. We have continued to protest, and protested again recently to the government there about what we understand are violations of human rights. With respect to the supply of offensive arms, our position has been that that should not be done, either by our country or by any other country, in a situation where there is internal discord. What I said was that I did not believe, however, that we should be leading a public crusade against the attitudes of the American administration which believes that it is acting in its own interest, and on the basis of information which it possesses and which it is beginning to share with its allies.

**Mr. McLean:** Madam Speaker, I notice on this issue a change from the usual expression of opinion on human rights