

● (1442)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SLAYING OF ISRAELI CIVILIANS—GOVERNMENT STATEMENT

Mr. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Has the Government of Canada made any statement following the brutal slaughter of Israeli civilians, including children, on a holiday bus over the weekend, for which the Palestine Liberation Organization has apparently claimed full credit?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): The question asked by the hon. gentleman gives me the opportunity to express the view of the government. We feel a sense of shock at this tragic and senseless act of violence involving the loss of innocent human lives. In addition to expressing this sense of shock, I should like to add the hope that the occurrence will not imperil current efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace which is the paramount objective of all parties concerned in the Middle East.

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GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

PROCEDURE IN DEALING WITH SUPPLY—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT MADE BY FORMER OFFICIAL

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. In light of the fact that there is presently on the order paper, in the hon. gentleman's name, a motion asking the House to short-circuit some of the rules so as to pass supplementary estimates and grant interim supply, will the Deputy Prime Minister try to obtain for members of the House, or table before next Wednesday when this motion becomes due, a copy of the remarks of Mr. Douglas Hartle, a former official of Treasury Board, who speaking in Toronto over the weekend to members of the Liberal party gave examples of mismanagement and expenditure on the part of the government which shocked even some case-hardened Liberals?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): There is no effort to short-circuit the rules of the House. There is an effort to provide an additional day not provided for under the rules, so that hon. members may be able to debate interim supply. That proposal has already been cleared and has received the sanction of representatives of all parties in the House. So we are operating in an open and democratic manner, which ought to appeal to even a case-hardened Tory like the hon. member.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baldwin: Now that the hon. gentleman has had a chance to collect his thoughts, perhaps he could give some attention to attempting to answer the question I put to him. Would he try to answer that question, for my sake and for the sake of hon. members generally, and at the same time deal

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with the other statement made by Mr. Hartle when he said ministers were successfully evading Treasury Board, and what I characterize as the pack rat mentality of the government in hiding examples of their mismanagement and extravagance?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what the hon. member wants me to do. Maybe it is to provide him with a copy of Mr. Hartle's speech given, as I gather, to the Liberal Association. Perhaps he would like to be put on the mailing list for all Liberal publications, which would be a very useful contribution to rectifying the hon. member's deficient education.

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POST OFFICE

GOVERNMENT VIEW OF LEGALITY OF RATE INCREASES

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Postmaster General and is supplementary to that asked by the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka. Why is the hon. gentleman ignoring the unanimous report of the committee on statutory instruments and regulations, an all-party committee chaired by the distinguished constitutional and legal authority, Senator Forsey, and the former hon. member for Halifax, Mr. McCleave, which indicated that to increase postal rates other than by amending the Post Office Act is strictly illegal?

[Translation]

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, I could give several answers to the numerous questions contained in the statement of the hon. member for Brandon-Souris. I can tell him that I have never rejected the possibility of forming at a given moment an inter-parliamentary committee to study the question of the Post Office. But, at the present time, I think it would be perhaps premature to make public the decisions of the ongoing conciliation. It would be wiser to wait for the conciliation report to be tabled, for its results to be known; then we will see how we must act.

As for the illegality of raising the fees from 12 cents to 14 cents, I think the members of the opposition would show a much greater sense of co-operation if they tried to help us make the public understand that the increase is to relieve the taxpayers from a deficit of \$125 million in the Post Office by charging it partly to the very users of postal services.

[English]

Mr. Dinsdale: That was an interesting statement by the Postmaster General, but it did not answer the question I posed. There were Liberals on the committee on statutory instruments and regulations, and while there might be a need for increasing postal rates to deal with the rising deficit brought about by maladministration and the other problems which are all too evident in the Post Office, why does the hon. gentleman not proceed by the legal route rather than by the illegal route?