

a position to report to the house on the meeting of the fact finding committee on coal held in Halifax on February 10, which was attended by the chairman of the dominion coal board?

Hon. Paul Comtois (Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys): Yes, Mr. Speaker. The chairman of the coal board met the authorities of the provincial government at the end of last week, and I have been informed that progress has been made. However, the information received is not yet complete, and another meeting will be required before a conclusion on the matter may be reached.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

FRANKING PRIVILEGES OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Azellus Denis (St. Denis): May I direct a question to the Postmaster General. According to the postal guide, among the franking and free mail privileges mentioned in subsection 291 is included all mailable matter sent by departments of the federal government. I should like to know from the Postmaster General whether this policy is still being followed by the government.

Hon. W. M. Hamilton (Postmaster General): As the hon. member well knows, this is the type of question which any other member would put on the order paper.

Mr. Denis: A supplementary question. Would the Postmaster General explain how it is that from the Department of Veterans Affairs we receive letters with 4 cent stamps on them? I should like to know whether the policy has changed in accordance with what the hon. gentleman wished to do when he was in opposition.

Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace): If the hon. member would send me the envelope I shall be glad to look into the matter.

Mr. Denis: I shall be glad to send over this envelope, and I hope the minister will do something good with it.

FLOODS

MANITOBA—INQUIRY AS TO REQUEST TO MAKE CORRESPONDENCE PUBLIC

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether I could ask the Prime Minister if he is in a position to answer the question I asked yesterday about the correspondence with the government of Manitoba regarding the flood control proposals for the Red river valley.

Department of Justice Act

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): I am sorry to have to tell the hon. member that I am not. I am sorry.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ACT

AMENDMENT PROVIDING FOR APPOINTMENT OF TWO ASSOCIATE DEPUTY MINISTERS

Hon. E. D. Fulton (Minister of Justice) moved that the house go into committee to consider the following resolution:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the Department of Justice Act to provide for the appointment of two associate deputy ministers of justice.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. Flynn in the chair.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Chairman, I am sure that the committee will agree with me that there is no need for a lengthy explanation of this resolution. I should perhaps make a brief statement as to some of the considerations moving the government to introduce the resolution and then would be glad to answer any questions that may be directed to me.

The main consideration which warrants the proposal contained in the resolution is, of course, the increase in the volume of work done by the Department of Justice and the increased importance of the status of that work. With regard to the second part of the proposition, I immediately disclaim any personal responsibility. I am not saying that it depends on the minister. It is a fact, however, that by virtue of the increasing complexity and scope of the government business bringing the government, as it does, into contact with outside organizations in a way that was perhaps not the case in earlier years there has been a change and steady development in the nature and the responsibility of the work undertaken by the Department of Justice for other departments of the government and for the government as a whole in connection with the legal advice, counsel and representation that must be afforded the government in the discharge of that work and in the official relationships on a legal basis that ensue from the nature of that work.

With regard to the first heading of the proposition which I put forward, I think the facts speak for themselves. I have some statistics if hon. members would be interested in them but I do not think it requires much elaboration to emphasize the fact that the size of government is growing with the increase in population, that the volume of government work naturally has grown as a result of and along with the increase in population, the broadening of the nature of the work done by the government and as a result of the increase