

Inquiries of the Ministry

telephone rates which the Bell Telephone Company is demanding and receiving.

Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, the exact words which I used yesterday afternoon in my speech were that to reorganize the post office on a business basis is itself a major undertaking. Beyond that, at this point I am in the realm of ideas, not policy. We may have to undertake major changes in structure to mould the post office into—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have to interrupt the minister for a moment to remind hon. members of the well established rule in connection with speeches that are made by ministers outside the house. The hon. member for York South can ask the minister a direct question. However, if he is now referring to a speech made outside the house he can only ask the Prime Minister whether the statements represent government policy. But I repeat that he can ask a question, if he so wishes, directly, as has already been done.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the indication that my question is proper. It was because of the minister's language that I asked him the question I did.

I should like to ask the minister a supplementary question. While he is preparing to make the post office more efficient, will he give consideration to introducing in Canada what is called the giro system for the post office, as recommended in and implemented by Great Britain, so that consumers can use the post office for other purposes and thus make greater use of the post office in competition with the chartered banks?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member is asking a question of very general nature. I suggest it should not be asked at this time but rather placed on the order paper.

[Translation]

AIRPORTS**QUEBEC—LOCATION OF INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport and of the acting minister, may I put my question to the Prime Minister?

Could he inquire and tell us why it is now impossible for us to get in touch with Mr. Henri Roussel, a highly qualified expert at

[Mr. Lewis.]

the Montreal office of the Canadian Transport Commission who disappeared two days after his statement that there is no major objection to locating an international airport on the south shore, though his chief, Mr. Baribeau had asserted that an international airport would never be located on the south shore?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I do not think that the question as asked is in order.

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**ALLEGED SNUBS BY PRESIDENT DE GAULLE— PARTICIPATION OF CANADIAN TROOPS IN TWO WORLD WARS**

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether or not, as a result of the latest snub on the part of General de Gaulle to the representative of Canada, the government of Canada is going to make a protest and bring to the attention of the President of France the tremendous sacrifice of Canadians on French soil both in the first war and in the second war, and that this kind of thing is not appreciated by Canada, with egregious snubs from week to week.

Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I seem to recall that last year the right hon. gentleman's party thought that we protested too much over the Gabon matter, which was a question of substance. The question the right hon. gentleman has put concerns social events. We feel that it is within the sovereign authority of the government of France to give dinners to whom they want. I might add that I think that our ambassador in Paris knows of other places where he can get a good meal.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That was a gratuitous statement about this party. The government was not criticized for any action it took; it was the pusillanimous nature of the protest that we objected to. I ask the Prime Minister, in his trip to Europe did he pass over France because of the cold atmosphere existing between the government of Canada and the government of France?

Mr. Trudeau: Well, Mr. Speaker, I admit I hoped to enter warmer climates, but I was not too lucky. It was raining in Rome also.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Was it not too hot?