

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East): I should like to ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the Prime Minister in a position to tell the house what consequences have flowed from representations which the Secretary of State for External Affairs said some six weeks ago would be made with respect to the apprehension of certain Christian trade union leaders in Cuba?

Mr. Diefenbaker: As the hon. gentleman knows, this is a question of detail and I will make the answer available to him tomorrow.

PUBLIC SERVICE**REPORTED STATEMENT RESPECTING BETRAYAL
OF GOVERNMENT**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Alexis Caron (Hull): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Is it a fact, as stated by the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency (Mr. Lafreniere) at his convention on Friday, March 23 last, that a part of the civil service is betraying the government? Has the Prime Minister any comment to make thereon?

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry; I did not hear the substance of the question—

Mr. Brunsden: There was not any.

Mr. Speaker: —after the reference to the civil service.

Mr. Caron: This is the question, Mr. Speaker. Is it a fact, as stated by the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency at his convention on Friday, March 23 last, that a part of the civil service is betraying the government? Has the Prime Minister any comment to make thereon?

Mr. Speaker: I think the hon. member will recall that questions asking the government to confirm statements by individual members have not generally been accepted on the orders of the day, but only where the statement might be construed as a statement of policy by a minister of the crown.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Caron: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, we want to know exactly whether the hon. member was speaking only as a member of parliament or whether he was giving the views of the government in that matter.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order. If the Prime Minister wishes to answer he is at liberty to do so.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have not seen the report, but I may say that any inference of the kind that is inherent in the hon. member's question is not my view. I am one of those who through the years have had an intimate knowledge of the civil service—my father for 25 years was a member of the department of customs—and my attitude to the civil service of Canada is one of deep trust and appreciation.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT**REQUEST FOR COMMEMORATIVE STAMP
HONOURING CANADIAN POET**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, to emphasize the interest of this group in the proper recognition of Canadian poets, I wish to address a question to the Postmaster General. Since August 2, 1962 is the centenary of the birth of the youngest of the big four of the confederation poets, Duncan Campbell Scott, would the Postmaster General consider commemorating the occasion with a special stamp?

Hon. W. M. Hamilton (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, the Postmaster General's appreciation of the field of arts and poetry of this country was illustrated in one way at least with the stamp in honour of Pauline Johnson issued about a year ago. Unfortunately it was not possible to include this year in the limited number of stamp issues available, out of the over 100 suggestions we received, a commemorative stamp for Mr. Scott, and at present there is not sufficient time available to produce it.

Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet I might just add that while Mr. Scott's is a very noteworthy birthday, I would like to pay my own personal regards to the hon. member for St. Denis (Mr. Denis) who has staggered along to another birthday today. Since I probably will not have the opportunity to extend my congratulations to him next year—he will not be here—I thought I would like to do it on this occasion.

Mr. Chevrier: You will be lucky if you are here.

Mr. Azellus Denis (St. Denis): Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, may I say a word of thanks to the Postmaster General for his greeting, which I appreciate very much. However, as we have some appreciation of some kinds of communism I want to share everything we have been doing. For four years we have been in the opposition, and I hope it will soon be their turn to take our place.