

● (1450)

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as the right hon. gentleman has mentioned, I understand that the High Commissioner for Jamaica may have made an unfortunate allegation—

Mr. Diefenbaker: Worse than that.

Mr. MacEachen:—while he was in Toronto to attend the funeral of a 15 year old Jamaican boy who had been shot while crossing a shopping mall. The officers of my department have spoken to the High Commissioner about this incident and have assured him that the Toronto police force is a competent, humane and efficient body. I am sure the High Commissioner has understood what has been conveyed to him, and I am quite sure that he, as an experienced representative in this country, understood fully the reasons for which he was spoken to on this matter.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, that answer is totally inadequate. Some official in External Affairs has spoken to the High Commissioner. He is an intelligent and an able man and that statement should be condemned by the minister and by the Prime Minister as something unworthy of anyone holding a diplomatic post here, particularly because it is one that, by reason of the country he represents, could not but have very difficult and strong reactions. Will the minister himself make it clear that this kind of thing is unjustified, instead of having some underling whisper to the High Commissioner?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: No answer?

Mr. MacEachen: It was a speech, not a question.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister whether he will personally bring to the attention of the High Commissioner the totally unjustifiable nature of a statement like that which cannot but add fuel to the fires of difficulty between races which are bound to arise? I have every sympathy for that boy who was killed, and his parents, but that is no justification for the statement that our law in this country denies fairness, and it is also no justification for an attack on those who cannot defend themselves, namely, the chief and the members of the Toronto police force.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I still find it difficult to detect a question in that representation by the right hon. gentleman.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Some more diffusion.

Mr. MacEachen: I can tell him that I have personally been in touch with the High Commissioner.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Why didn't you tell us?

Mr. MacEachen: I was in touch with the High Commissioner on this general subject some days ago, and in respect of this particular incident my officials have spoken to the High Commissioner.

Oral Questions

Mr. Diefenbaker: Why not the minister?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I will reserve the right to choose my own language rather than use the usual inflammatory language used by the right hon. gentleman.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, we now realize that with this minister nice, soft words are to be used always as was the case in respect of North Viet Nam and U.S. relations.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I was tempted to say that the use of the kind of expression the right hon. gentleman suggests is probably why Canadian foreign relations were in such tatters in the days after he was Prime Minister of Canada.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Canada's foreign relations are lower today than they ever were.

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ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

ALLEGATION ADVERTISING CONTRACT AWARDED TO FRIEND OF SOLICITOR GENERAL—GOVERNMENT ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS ADVERTISING CONTRACTS BE FREE OF PATRONAGE

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, I intended to direct my question to the Prime Minister because of his interest in the philosophy of purity in politics, but perhaps I should direct it to the Acting Prime Minister. I would ask, to use some of the words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, about certain transgressions, perhaps, of other administrations. Does not the Acting Prime Minister, who is the President of the Privy Council and the government House leader, believe that Canada's national police force, the RCMP, stands higher and with more integrity and character than one to become just the personal fiefdom of the minister responsible for the RCMP? I refer specifically to the advertising contract awarded to a personal friend of the Solicitor General without tender, namely, a firm that was formed for that purpose? Can the Acting Prime Minister give any explanation of the reason the RCMP should be subjected to this type of petty patronage and not be beyond any taint of patronage?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I, of course, deny the implications in the question. The Solicitor General is one of the most sensitive ministers in this House with regard to the RCMP. He defends it and he understands his position in relation to it. However, I know that he would like to answer the question directly on Monday.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, I will look forward to any answer from the Solicitor General, who I have said publicly is doing a very good job which makes it much more shocking that this type of patronage is going on. Since the Royal Commission on Government Organization in 1962, and that gets us back to the time when the House leader was Secretary of State for External Affairs, recommended that patronage should be kept out of the advertising busi-