

Oral Questions

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the officials of the United States government are very well aware of the statements made by me on this subject, by the Minister of the Environment and by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. We are preparing for the kind of negotiations that will be necessary. It is a negotiation, and it is one in which I hope we can succeed.

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POST OFFICE

REPORTED POSSIBLE STRIKE OF POSTMASTERS—STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Postmaster General. As there are reports that the Canadian Postmasters Association will go on strike, what is the status of current negotiations between the Post Office and the CPA?

Hon. André Ouellet (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that a tentative agreement was concluded this morning with the Canadian Postmasters Association; therefore I doubt that there will be a strike. I am very hopeful that this settlement will be ratified by the postmasters.

RURAL MAIL CONTRACTORS—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON RESULTS OF STUDY

Mr. Alex Patterson (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Postmaster General. In replying to the question I asked on June 18 the Postmaster General indicated that the representations on behalf of rural mail contractors had been under active consideration. Is the minister in a position to advise the House of the results of the review of the terms of rural mail contracts and the request made by myself and others on behalf of these contractors?

Hon. André Ouellet (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, the last time such a question was asked of me I said I was most anxious to act in order to adjust some contracts between the Post Office and many of our rural route contractors. I had to wait at the time for a settlement with the Canadian Postmasters Association. Now we have good news for the postmasters. I am very confident that I will be able to announce in a few weeks' time very good news for our rural route contractors.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Ottawa West and then call orders of the day.

[Mr. Leggatt.]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

REASON FOR ALLEGED PRINTING OF RATION STAMPS

Mr. Peter Reilly (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my question derives from the line of questioning begun by my leader at the beginning of the question period.

An hon. Member: Which one?

Mr. Reilly: Which one? We have but one leader on this side of the House. But if we had two, we would have two more than hon. members opposite.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the hon. member would ask his question. As hon. members know, we have reached the end of the question period. Questions should be asked quickly and answers, if any, given quickly. After this question I will call orders of the day.

Mr. Reilly: Mr. Speaker, I am directing my question to the Prime Minister, with all the respect that is due to him. Following his statement the other day that there was no shortage of food in Canada, I want to know why it has been necessary for the government to have printed, by a firm in Toronto, millions of ration stamps, including those applying to food and other commodities.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, could the hon. gentleman give me the source of this information, or substantiate it in some way?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: If it is not a pure canard I will take the question most seriously, but I imagine it is either a figment of the hon. member's imagination or somebody else's.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the House would consent to my recognizing the hon. member for Malpeque. I had intended to recognize him earlier. He has been very patient.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. MacLean: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the government House leader the usual Thursday question as to what business he proposes to bring before the House for the rest of this week and next week?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, we will continue in committee of the whole on the bill to amend the Old Age Security Act. This will be followed by second reading of the bill to amend the statute law providing for the payment of supplementary retirement benefits, which will be followed by the bill to amend the Family Allowances Act. My hon. friend is aware that there are number of allotted days to be dealt with, and I am considering calling such a day for Monday.