

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Are we not being obliged at present to debate a resolution which is entirely false, because it is asking for an excessive amount of money?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of National Revenue and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should answer this question. It is customary in interim supply to grant one twelfth of supply each month. It might not be possible for departments to spend exactly one twelfth of the supply provided for that month; but I should also like to point out to my hon. friend that if his party does not discontinue the filibuster it is presently carrying on, the entire supply will have to be passed in six days.

Mr. Speaker: The answer given by the minister confirms my view that this is a matter which should be discussed when the subject comes before the committee of supply.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**USE OF ELECTRONIC LISTENING DEVICES**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the delightfully humorous Minister of Transport. Are officials of his department investigating the frightening invasion of the civil rights and liberties of a good Canadian union at Vancouver by the installation of listening devices in the Ritz Hotel for the purpose of hearing their executive and other meetings?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, of course I cannot accept the preamble of the hon. gentleman's question. This is his own affair. However, the sole question that is of concern to the Department of Transport is whether or not unlicensed radio transmitting and receiving was taking place, and that is being investigated. The department is quite properly only discharging the responsibilities given to the department by parliament.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Transport relating to the question asked by the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge). I should like to ask the minister whether he would investigate the situation in which President McLaughlin of the seaway union, along with the trustees, authorized a substantial payment of money in order that the vice president of

that union could withdraw without bringing further publicity to the union on another assault charge similar to the Hal Banks affair.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, if this matter were to be investigated by me it would go far beyond the powers given by parliament to the Minister of Transport.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT**REPORT ON NEGOTIATIONS TO AVOID STRIKE**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Revenue and President of the Treasury Board. Could the minister report to the house on what progress he and his departmental officials are making in dealing with the threatened strike of the postal workers of Canada?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of National Revenue and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I should like to point out that Hon. Mr. Justice Montpetit has been working here since last Thursday morning, although it has been erroneously reported in the press that he started his work on Friday. Continuous meetings have taken place since that day. My officials and I met with Mr. Justice Montpetit this morning and joint meetings of my officials and the postal workers will take place this afternoon and will continue in the evening. I can assure the hon. member that the government is making every possible effort to try to resolve this very difficult matter.

Mr. Churchill: You have plenty of money now.

FARM MACHINERY**ACTION TO DISCOURAGE PRICE INCREASE**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. C. S. Smallwood (Battle River-Camrose): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture but in his absence I will put it to the Prime Minister. On October 20 I asked the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Greene) what action he intended to take in regard to the suggested increase in the price of farm machinery, but I got no reply. On November 1 all the big farm machinery companies announced an increase in the price of farm implements, which will mean an increase to a farmer of \$500 on a \$10,000 tractor. What action will the government take