

in. Well, Mr. Speaker, we would not be surprised in view of all the circumstances and the way this matter has been handled by the government.

[Translation]

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, I was somewhat worried when I saw that the hon. member's remarks were aimed at me. He had seven minutes to talk about one point. Naturally he tried to touch all bases and consequently he scored no point at all.

If he were to refer to *Hansard*, the hon. member would see that the statements he has made are totally inaccurate. Mr. Speaker, I have never given the House any assurance that there had been no implications. I did indicate that I had made a preliminary investigation within my department and that, by so doing, I had made sure that so far, to the knowledge of the officials of my department, there had not been any co-operation with the RCMP.

[English]

I should like to indicate to the hon. gentleman that that particular information has indeed been corroborated by the information which has been provided by the Solicitor General (Mr. Fox). I have indicated to the hon. member's colleague, the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale), that if he has any evidence of collaboration or any instance of co-operation between postal authorities and members of the RCMP, then I would be pleased to receive it. I have also said, and indeed have so undertaken to the hon. gentleman and to the House, that I would pursue my investigations, and these are continuing now. It is my responsibility under Section 43 of the Post Office Act to ascertain that there has not been any illegal conduct by any postal official. This I have done and am continuously doing so. It is my responsibility to ascertain all the facts and to take such measures as are available to me under the Post Office Act.

The hon. member also knows that Section 48(3) permits me to conduct an inquiry. To date I have not commissioned such an inquiry because I am still conducting my preliminary investigation. On ascertaining the facts which are available to me, I will then decide whether such inquiry ought to be conducted.

There is another comment that the hon. gentleman made in connection with reports which were filed in this House by the Solicitor General. If he had paid any attention during question period today to the reply of the Solicitor General, he would know that there is no need at all to file any information relating to any interception except as required under the amendments to the Official Secrets Act dealing with communications. The Solicitor General said he had obtained a legal opinion from the Department of Justice to the effect that that would not include mail interceptions. There the matter lies.

The Solicitor General also said that although he had received information from the RCMP that there were mail interceptions, he did not know whether any postal officials were involved. Until such time as I am assured—

Adjournment Debate

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret that the three minutes allotted to the minister are well past.

• (1812)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—MEASURES TO AID EMPLOYEES AFFECTED BY CHANGE IN VALUE OF CANADIAN DOLLAR

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, my message concerns the several thousands of Canadians who serve this country abroad on behalf of the Government of Canada and its various departments, and on behalf of the Armed Forces. Before getting into that message, perhaps I might be permitted to say that once a late show, always a late show. The fact that we have moved it up a couple of hours does not seem to have changed the numbers of people who are clamouring as they did when it was ten o'clock at night to get in to see what was going on, as compared to now when they are still clamouring.

The reason I brought us here at this hour, instead of later on, is due to the fact that the vagaries of inflation and the changing fortunes of the Canadian dollar have affected the lives of those who serve us abroad. Therefore on Wednesday, November 9, 1977, as reported at page 742 of *Hansard*, I asked the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Jamieson) what steps the government was taking to help Canadians serving abroad in the employment of Canada who are affected by the changes in the fortunes of the Canadian dollar. I think the parliamentary secretary has a recent reply. I will not use my seven minutes in pressing the question, and I hope he will have all the time in the world to spell forth the Canadian policy.

Aside from the Secretary of State for External Affairs, I could have posed that question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Cullen) because that department has officials abroad. In fact I could have asked that question of several other departments. I could have asked the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Horner), but I would be afraid that gentleman would offer us what he did to a learned gathering in Toronto a while back. He said that he had no pancreas for the problems at the moment. When the minister said that, it left so many people on the floor trying to stop laughing and attempting to get up that I assume it would be useless to ask a similar question of him in this particular Chamber.

In any event, I could have turned to the Minister of Employment and Immigration or the Secretary of State for External Affairs, because they have some milk of human kindness flowing in their veins. Whenever the dollar plunges, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce thinks that this is one of the better things that has happened to Canada. When we go bust, I imagine he will write something which will make Milton, Dante and a few other authors turn over in their graves and admire him.

Be that as it may, I am asking specifically about the fate of those who work abroad for Canada, whether they be in the Armed Forces, External Affairs, Industry, Trade and Commerce, Manpower and Immigration or any other body, and