

from any other minister who might be prepared to enter into this question—whether or not it is the intention of the government to make available, now, to those provinces which express an interest in knowing it, the negotiating position Canada will be presenting at GATT? Will that information be made available now, or is some other kind of information going to be made available later on a confidential basis?

● (1452)

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I have nothing to add to what has already been said by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and by the right hon. Prime Minister. This morning the provincial premiers and the Prime Minister of Canada have had a very frank discussion and I understand they have reached an agreement.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

INQUIRY WHETHER SOLICITOR GENERAL HAD MEETINGS WITH POLICE ASSOCIATIONS

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Solicitor General.

Could the minister tell me if he had an appointment yesterday to meet the representatives of Canadian police associations and, if so, why was he unable to meet them, and did he know what they wanted to talk to him about? In the meantime, did he have the opportunity today to meet the representatives of these Canadian police associations?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I did not have an appointment to meet this association yesterday and my agenda makes it impossible for me to meet them. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I will be attending the federal-provincial conference after the oral question period.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): May I ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker?

Did the minister's executive assistant advise him that they tried to meet him yesterday with regard to this issue?

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, I was not made aware that someone tried to meet me yesterday. I was not there anyway.

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[English]

POST OFFICE

SUGGESTION POSTAL RATE INCREASES POSTPONED UNTIL LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Postmaster General. I congratulate him and sympathize with him as he becomes the sixth person to hold this office in as many years. In view of the promise of his predecessor that postal rate increases shall come only after the

Oral Questions

Post Office has achieved a satisfactory level of efficiency, and the further promise that there will be consultation with major postal users before any announcement of rate increases is made, will the Postmaster General postpone the rate increase announced by his predecessor last November, to take effect on April 1, until such time as the conditions outlined in the preamble to this question are met?

[Translation]

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, I must say that the decision to increase postal rates was taken before I came into office. I think these increases were quite wisely planned for they will greatly help reduce the \$600 million deficit. That will not in any way prevent us from making postal services more efficient and solving current labour problems.

[English]

Mr. Dinsdale: Mr. Speaker, is the Postmaster General aware of the reply of one of his predecessors, the present Minister of State for Urban Affairs, to a written question in the House of Commons, appearing in *Hansard* for March 13, 1974, when he said:

Rates of postage for domestic letter mail are set out in section 10 of the Post Office Act. Changes in these rates, therefore, are possible only by act of parliament.

In light of this opinion expressed by the minister's predecessor, and in face of a \$600 million deficit, will the new Postmaster General now agree to increase postal rates legally, by act of parliament, rather than illegally by ministerial decree?

[Translation]

Mr. Lamontagne: Mr. Speaker, since I am the sixth Postmaster General in seven years, I cannot be aware of all the statements made by my predecessors, however, I will take notice of the question in order to give an adequate answer.

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[English]

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

DENIAL OF INFORMATION TO OPPOSITION MEMBER

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Deputy Prime Minister. Given the fact that there is far more openness in the United States as a result of the Watergate scandal—a similar scenario we watched with interest developing in Canada—can the hon. gentleman indicate if he will facilitate the work of a member of this party in trying to secure, under the freedom of information act in the United States, the information which the hon. gentleman personally, and the government, has denied to the hon. member for Yukon and other hon. members of this party? If he will not facilitate such an application, will he at least indicate that the government will not frustrate an attempt to secure information in that way, as was done in connection with the atomic energy cartel case?