

Inquiries of the Ministry

within my area of responsibility I will dare to answer it by saying no. However, since hon. members may not remember the beginning of the question, may I say that we certainly welcome this development and will watch it with great interest. I think—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I remember the beginning of the question.

INQUIRY AS TO SECRET AGREEMENT BETWEEN CANADA AND UNITED STATES

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct this question to the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Lang). Now that a prominent senator has publicly stated that the 1967 secret oil agreement between Canada and the United States is illegal, will the minister tell the house whether a more recent secret and illegal agreement has been negotiated?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am not sure whether the question as asked is in order.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ALEUTIAN ISLANDS—PROPOSED NUCLEAR TESTS—INQUIRY AS TO CONSULTATION

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the misgivings expressed by wildlife conservationists about the possibility of triggering earthquakes along the Pacific coast, has the government of Canada been consulted about the proposed massive underground nuclear tests at Anchitka in the Aleutians next October?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I do not think the hon. member's earth-shaking question is in order.

[Later:]

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker, in view of the seriousness of the matter I wonder whether I might have permission to restate my earth-shaking question. Has the government of Canada made any representations to or received any information from the government of the United States concerning the possible ramifications of the proposed underground nuclear tests in the Aleutian Islands?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, personally I have not. It may be that my officials have and I will make inquiries.

[Mr. Lang (Saskatoon-Humboldt).]

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

RAPIDITY OF MAIL DELIVERY

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the congenial Postmaster General. It is based on the minister's recent pronouncement to the effect that "99 per cent of the people in this country for 99 per cent of the time receive their mail within 24 hours." Considering that for the majority of Canadians there is no mail delivery on Saturday and Sunday, a 48-hour period, can the minister advise whether his statement on speedy mail delivery means that only one per cent of Post Office patrons—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's question is 99 per cent argumentative.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ALLEGED STATEMENT BY BRIGADIER GENERAL HAMILTON RESPECTING STARVATION AND WAR

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Has the minister undertaken an investigation into the report that Brigadier General Charles Hamilton, Canadian member of the international observer team in Nigeria, is alleged to have stated that, from all the chronicals of war and personal experience, "starvation is a legitimate weapon of war"?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have had a report and I can deny that Brigadier Hamilton said the things he was accused of saying.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister made any protest to the government of Nigeria, an officer of which is reported to have attributed this remark to the Canadian general?

Mr. Sharp: No, Mr. Speaker. I did not know the Nigerian government was involved. What I received was an account of what the officer had said and it was said in the presence of witnesses. I therefore have no hesitation in saying he was misquoted, but I did not know that the Nigerian government was involved.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): A supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Did the officer say anything