

*Inquiries of the Ministry*REPORTED REFERENCE BY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN TO
SOME EMPLOYEES AS BEING CORRUPTIBLE SLOBS—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact it may be a few days before that committee meets, will the President of the Treasury Board on behalf of the government disown forthwith this reference to public servants as corruptible slobs?

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation whatsoever in saying that it is not the view of the government that the public service is composed of corruptible slobs.

Mr. Baldwin: We had better stop him from reading the Prime Minister's speeches.

An hon. Member: How about the minister being one?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for York South.

Mr. Lewis: I do not have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the hon. member for Lambton-Kent, who has a supplementary question, might be given the floor now and then I will recognize the hon. member for York South.

REPORTED REFERENCE BY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN TO
SOME EMPLOYEES AS BEING CORRUPTIBLE SLOBS—
REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE THAT COMMITTEE WILL
NOT BE INHIBITED

Mr. Mac T. McCutcheon (Lambton-Kent): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my supplementary question to the President of the Treasury Board. Can the minister assure the House that the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates will be free of the interference and inhibition implied yesterday by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton to have been the case last year in regard to that committee?

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): I think that the assumption on which the question is based is not justified; consequently the question becomes hypothetical.

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COMMUNICATIONS

BELL CANADA RATE INCREASES—REQUEST FOR
GOVERNMENT ACTION TO RESCIND

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Communications on a subject on which I have asked him questions formerly. In view of the fact that the increase in Bell Telephone rates came into force today, I want to ask the minister whether he has completed the study of this matter which was considered by the Canadian Transport Commission—he said he was making a study some time ago—and whether he has made a report to the cabinet asking for action to be

[Mr. Drury.]

taken to stop this totally unjustified gouging of the public?

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I could not reach a conclusion as readily as the hon. member seems to be able to. I am still awaiting the report to which he refers. He may have heard the same news report as I did, that a citizen has apparently taken steps to obtain a judicial review of this decision, as is the right of any citizen, including the hon. member.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Or the responsibility of the government.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that a citizen taking an appeal to a court, with all the steps and all the financial costs that are involved, is not likely to end this unfair increase for a long time, may I ask the minister whether he would undertake to give serious consideration to acting on his own motion or to the government acting on its own motion, as it has the authority to do under a section of the National Transportation Act, to rescind the decision of the commission?

Mr. Stanbury: I have said that I am doing exactly that, but I will not jump to a conclusion without analysis as the hon. member has.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, if the minister was as concerned about the customers of Bell as he is to be smart he would do something.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Lewis: I have analysed the situation.

Mr. Stanbury: I hope I will have the opportunity to be as smart as the hon. member after the study has been completed.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am hoping that both the minister and the hon. member will return to questions and answers.

BELL CANADA RATE INCREASES—REQUEST THAT
APPELLANT, DR. LLOYD BROWN-JOHN, BE PROVIDED
WITH COPY OF TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Communications a question arising out of the fact that Dr. Lloyd Brown-John of the University of Windsor has in fact taken an appeal which has already cost him personally \$250 to launch. Would the minister consider obtaining for Dr. Brown-John a copy of the transcript of the proceedings before the commission which would otherwise cost him \$1,750?

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister of Communications): I will be glad to give consideration to that. I would point out to the hon. member, however, that this Parliament has provided procedures for the consideration of appropriate rates, and I do not think that a minister should abruptly come to a conclusion to interfere with the decisions of the commission without thorough consideration. I am quite willing to consider all the suggestions the hon. member has made, and I will be in a position to make a statement about the matter shortly.