

Inquiries of the Ministry

Do the parliamentary privileges of a member give him the right to request another member's resignation?

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, it is not one of the prerogatives of the Minister of Justice to give a legal opinion. I think that the hon. member should consult his lawyer.

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Real Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Postmaster General who has just said that he has no advice to take from the Social Credit. Could he now tell us for example if the government is taking advice from American interests?

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT**MONTREAL—STEPS TAKEN FOLLOWING MAIL BOX EXPLOSIONS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Remi Paul (Berthier-Maskinonge-Delaudiere): My question is directed to the Postmaster General (Mr. Denis), but first, since he is a native of my riding, I should like to congratulate him upon his appointment.

Could the minister tell us what steps his department intends to take about the explosions in Montreal, yesterday and today, which have damaged five mail boxes, property of the Post Office Department.

Hon. Azellus Denis (Postmaster General): I wish to thank my hon. friend for his congratulations. Indeed, five mail boxes were destroyed by bomb explosions. Also, this morning, four more mail boxes had to be covered with sand to prevent any accident.

Sergeant-major Walter Leja defused the first two bombs, but was unfortunately killed while trying to defuse the third one.

I wish to take this opportunity to offer my deepest sympathies to his family.

Now, in the face of this danger, we have decided to use trailers to remove these mail boxes and transport them to a safe place. We have taken this course of action after having received phone calls and after having been warned by those who are clearing letter boxes that they contained bombs. We have decided to take this action and we shall have to continue to do so. I believe that after 12 hours the danger will have disappeared. We have notified the municipal police authorities who are searching for the offenders, while setting up a special watch. I am waiting for more news from Montreal on this matter.

[Mr. Marcoux.]

INQUIRY AS TO SALARY INCREASES FOR EMPLOYEES

Mr. Georges Valade (St. Mary): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Postmaster General. Since the 60-day period for the great Liberal achievements is drawing to a close and before my hon. friend becomes a member of the Senate, I would like to ask him if he intends to raise the salaries of the post office employees, which he so often advocated when he was a member of the opposition?

Hon. Azellus Denis (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member for St. Mary, who gives way as usual to his fancies, he is surely aware of the fact that the matter of salaries is a responsibility of the civil service commission. A survey has been made and, unless I am mistaken, the results are being studied at present by the treasury board. Accordingly, the announcement of the increases will be made in due time.

Mr. Valade: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the Postmaster General mean by this that he does not intend to raise the salaries of the post office employees?

Mr. Denis: Mr. Speaker, I will say again that as soon as the report on the question is published, the hon. member will find the information he desires.

[Later:]

ALLEGED CONTINUATION OF PATRONAGE IN DEPARTMENT

Mr. Gerard Chapdelaine (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Postmaster General. Does the minister intend to maintain in his department the patronage which existed under the Conservative government, as well as under the previous Liberal administration, in the award of contracts for the conveyance and delivery of mail?

Hon. Azellus Denis (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, since we came to power only a few weeks ago, I do not feel we are responsible for everything that was done in the past under the Conservative government. But, at any rate, I do not think the Liberal party has any lesson to be taught, especially from the Social Credit party.

Mr. Chapdelaine: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister suggesting that the Social Credit party could give some advice concerning departmental administration?