

Mr. Dinsdale: Now that the cabinet has met on the matter, what assurance can be given that the impending postal strike, which would be disastrous to an already crippled Canadian economy, will be avoided?

Mr. D. M. Collette (Parliamentary Secretary to Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, as hon. members know, the present situation with CUPW is at a crucial stage, and this afternoon the minister is working toward achieving a settlement. That is why he is not here in the House. I suggest that the hon. member wait until tomorrow morning before he asks any further questions.

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FISHERIES

PROPOSED TRANSFER OF WEATHER FORECASTING SERVICES

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment and the Minister of State (Environment), I will turn to the President of the Treasury Board since my question deals with cutbacks.

In light of the recent announcement by the Department of the Environment that there will be a cut in weather forecasting services in Newfoundland and Labrador, a decision which will seriously endanger the lives and safety of thousands of fishermen who operate off the Newfoundland coast, and in view of the minister's announcement that weather forecasting services in Newfoundland and Labrador will be transferred to Halifax, can the minister assure this House unequivocally that the weather forecasting services will not be transferred to Halifax, and can he further assure the House that there will be no cut in weather forecasting services off the Newfoundland coast?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I will take notice of the question and refer it to the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ASSISTANCE TO LEBANESE

Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton-Strathcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Given the government's termination of Canadian involvement in the UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon, can the minister inform the House whether the government will accede to the request of the Lebanese community in Canada for augmented humanitarian help to the people of Lebanon, and whether steps will be taken to reunite families?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, on both counts the answer is yes; but, once again, it is difficult to give all the details. I met with the delegation which was in Ottawa on Tuesday. I indicated that I

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will raise this issue with the foreign ministers of the Western Five on the Security Council this weekend in Pretoria, so that in terms of the follow-on action to which the hon. member refers, I think he can rest assured that it is in hand.

On the matter of reunification of families, we, of course, will be as forthcoming as possible. The group to which I spoke on Tuesday emphasized, however, that it was not stressing the need for or its desire to have a refugee kind of operation. The objective of the delegation is to ensure that the Lebanese people have a right to live in peace and in decency in their own country and, of course, I subscribe to that, as I am sure all hon. members do. However, we will look at humanitarian cases as sympathetically and as generously as we can.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

SUGGESTED EARLY TERMINATION OF THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister which arises out of the motion of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby dealing with the termination of the throne speech debate and the bringing in of legislation.

On October 10, the Prime Minister indicated that the government was prepared to get down to the business of legislating, which indicated to me that it had legislation available. Would the Deputy Prime Minister consider putting notice of that legislation down tomorrow and introducing it on Monday, so that we can have an opportunity to study it while the throne speech debate is on and so we will be able to review it carefully and understand the readiness of the government with respect to this matter?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, there will be notice given of a number of items of legislation today and tomorrow so that hon. members may have an opportunity to study the bills before they are called.

I advise the hon. gentleman that with respect to terminating the debate on the address, I will possibly interrupt the debate after the amendment and the subamendment are dealt with. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition will not propose an amendment. If he does not, that will make my life easier. However, once the amendment and the subamendment are disposed of, I may interrupt the throne speech debate and bring on legislative items.

I see no profit whatever in accepting the suggestion of the Leader of the New Democratic Party unless he combines with that suggestion an offer that whatever days are saved on the address will not be added to the already large number of opposition days with which we have to deal.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I gather from his remarks that the Deputy Prime Minister is planning a