

Inquiries of the Ministry

our present subsidy to newspaper publishers amounts to approximately \$37 million. Some weeks ago when the Post Office Department announced that it had every intention of trying to bring its budget into balance we were happy to receive the almost universal editorial approval of the newspapers across the country. Now apparently the question is, who pays for it? Me?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): I have a supplementary question. Would the minister review his decision not to have this bill sent to a committee, so that thousands of people all over Canada who want to express their dissent will have a forum in which to do so?

Mr. Kierans: Mr. Speaker, they will have the forum in this house. I think all the briefs that have been presented have also been presented to previous governments. Everyone wants to see the government and the Post Office Department reduce their deficits, but it is also true that everyone wants everybody else to be the victim of any such measures rather than themselves.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): I have a supplementary question for the Postmaster General concerning his reference to the \$37 million deficit. What portion of that sum is made up by so-called Canadian editions of U.S. magazines?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would think this is a point of debate.

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): I have a supplementary question to the Postmaster General. Can he say whether representations have been made to him objecting to the five day delivery rather than to the increase in rates?

Mr. Kierans: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Liberal caucus has formed a group of 35 people who are studying this matter, not just protesting against it, and I am having meetings with them and listening to arguments, not to emotion.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

An hon. Member: Why not send it to a house committee?

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy Royal): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary and unemotional question. Will the minister say what plans he has to see that daily newspapers are received by people six days of the week?

[Mr. Kierans.]

Mr. Kierans: I think I would be prepared to answer that after two or three more discussions with members of the Liberal caucus.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey): I have a supplementary question. Would the minister give consideration to exempting from the increases on second class profit oriented mail those publications which are not profit oriented, such as educational newspapers?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have to remind hon. members that we are now discussing a matter which is on the order paper and is already before the house. It is certainly irregular to be spending the time of the house in asking questions of the minister about a legislative proposal which is before the house and which I assume, will in due course come before hon. members for study and consideration. It seems to me that that would be the normal time to submit representations to the minister.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister arising out of the answers given by the Postmaster General. In the light of these answers could he indicate of what value parliament is?

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. In view of the answer of the Postmaster General, which was most interesting and illuminating, certainly members of this house will carry on an unemotional debate on a bill which will affect most people in Canada rather severely if it goes through unamended. My original intention was to put a question to the Postmaster General but since you, Mr. Speaker, will not allow any more supplementary questions I rise on a point of order to say to the Postmaster General that if the house is to continue an unemotional debate on the bill and if the Postmaster General will be absent from the house on the two or three days when he is not scheduled to be here in the question period so as to enable him to meet with the Liberal caucus, could he also take into his confidence in an unemotional way some hon. members on this side who will be debating the merits of this bill and present to the house some of the surveys and reports from his officials which have gone into his decisions in drafting the bill he has presented to the house? This would certainly make for a