

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Brewin: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister assure the house that before the conference meets the house will be informed of the formula for the amendment of the constitution in Canada that the government will put before the provincial representatives?

Mr. Favreau: Mr. Speaker, I shall consider this suggestion and report to the house on the government's decision in this respect.

Mr. Reid Scott (Danforth): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister also take into consideration providing an opportunity for the house to express its views on the government's proposals to the attorneys general before they are actually presented, so they might have the benefit of the views of the other parties in this parliament?

Mr. Favreau: Mr. Speaker, one way in which this could be done, and it is an apt suggestion, would be for my estimates to be called as early as possible, and I shall arrange for them to be called on the occasion of the first supply motion which has been announced by the Prime Minister.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, may I put a supplementary question to the Minister of Justice?

Could the minister tell us whether the statement made by the hon. member for Drummond-Arthabaska to the effect that it would be impossible and dangerous to revise the constitution reflects the principles and policy of this government?

Mr. Favreau: Mr. Speaker, I did not have the pleasure of hearing the speech of the hon. member for Drummond-Arthabaska, but I will be pleased to read it.

[Text]

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

HAL BANKS—INQUIRY AS TO WHEREABOUTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Raymond Langlois (Mégantic): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. Has the minister any information to communicate to the house concerning the whereabouts of Hal Banks, our modern day Al Capone?

Hon. Guy Favreau (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I had proposed to give the house whatever information we may have gathered some time during this week, but I think that

[Mr. Favreau.]

once a week would be quite a good ratio in this respect.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): I might ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister any information on the repatriation of Banks from the United States? Is he now able to answer the question I have asked several times, namely whether he has ascertained from the United States immigration authorities that Mr. Banks left Canada for the United States? And is the minister now in a position to advise whether counsel for the government have given the government the opinion that on the basis of the fact that the charge against Banks for which he is being sought is conspiracy, if Banks is in the United States no extradition is possible?

Mr. Favreau: Mr. Speaker, in answer to the last part of the question I must say it is the opinion of the Department of Justice that the offences for which Banks is being prosecuted or has been prosecuted are not extraditable offences. As to the first part of the question, I must say that although we have received full co-operation from the United States authorities the latter have not yet been able to define the whereabouts of Mr. Banks.

Mr. Diefenbaker: How long ago did the government of Canada or the Department of Justice realize that once Banks got out on bail on this charge and left Canada, the sole recourse would be the estreatment of the bail bond, and that Banks would have flown and would be entirely free as long as he stayed in the United States?

Mr. Langlois: A supplementary question—

Mr. Diefenbaker: I want to know. There is gross negligence here somewhere, and I want to find out how long it has existed.

Mr. Favreau: In view of the allegation of gross negligence just made by the right hon. gentleman I think I must repeat that at the time Banks asked for bail the department saw to it that counsel objected to any bail at all being granted. When the judge stated it was his intention to grant bail the suggestion was then made that bail ought not to be lower than \$50,000. I repeat that everything possible has been done. When the chief justice of the court of appeal exercised his own discretion I think he did so with that sense of honesty and sense of justice for which he is well known.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I have nothing to say about the honesty and integrity