

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, once again the answer to the question is yes. The tattoo was obviously a great success and everyone on both sides of the House is terribly proud and impressed with the success of the tattoo. I do not think anyone on either side of the House would want to take particular credit for it. The credit lies with the people who were involved in the tattoo, and I am delighted to send to them my grateful congratulations.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN SINAI DESERT PEACEKEEPING OPERATION

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister I will direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. He may know that a few days ago the Associated Press carried a news story concerning peacekeeping forces in the Sinai Desert which stated, "Canada says it will participate but has not yet been asked."

As this peacekeeping force is not to be under the United Nations auspices but rather under the auspices of the United States, and as it will be a first time, will the minister assure the House that, before these troops are committed, the House will be consulted and will give its approval?

• (1450)

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, first of all, it would not be the first time we have engaged in such an operation and it would not be customary to give any such assurance to the House. At this point we have not been officially asked to participate in the force. Because it is being talked about we have given it some consideration, but I have no further announcement to make at this time.

REQUEST FOR DETAILS OF PROPOSED PARTICIPATION

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Madam Speaker, I shall direct my supplementary to the Minister of National Defence. Perhaps he could enlighten me as to when we sent peacekeeping forces anywhere in the world under U.S. control.

Referring to these discussions, could the minister tell me how many Canadian troops are involved, and has any thought been given to setting a time limit on the length of time these troops will be employed? Also, will the minister notify our NATO allies that some of our other NATO commitments must be placed on hold during the time our troops are serving under United States control in the Sinai?

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, I do not remember any time that Canada had a peacekeeping force under U.S. control.

Oral Questions

Miss MacDonald: Tell that to Mark.

Mr. Lamontagne: I think most of the peacekeeping forces in which Canada had a part were under the auspices of the United Nations. As to the other details of the question, I ask the hon. member to place them on the Order Paper and I will prepare an answer.

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AGRICULTURE

STABILIZATION PAYMENTS FOR BEEF PRODUCERS

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the serious financial problems facing beef producers this fall with dramatically increased input costs and prices reduced, is the minister prepared to recommend to cabinet that a substantial stabilization payment be made to these hard pressed producers, and that this assistance will be announced in the budget on November 12?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: And will he resign if that does not happen?

An hon. Member: Again.

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, the hon. member knows that finished beef is a commodity about which a recommendation has to be made when the year ends for that product. That recommendation will be made concerning stabilization. I am sure the hon. member knows that the Canadian Cattlemen's Association have recommended, not the statutory 90 per cent of the last five-year average, but 95 per cent or 100 per cent of the last five-year average. If I go that way, I have to have cabinet approval, etc.

Mr. Epp: What is the etc. business?

Mr. Whelan: The other way, just using the statutory 90 per cent of the last five-year average would need no payment for beef. Farmers have had low income over the past four years and unless you move to either 95 per cent or 100 per cent of the last five-year average, it would mean no payment. We are considering that.

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ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

OPENING OF FIRST CLASS MAIL—REQUEST THAT STUDY BE RELEASED

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General who speaks for the RCMP. The concern in my question relates not only to the invasion of private homes through the use of writs of assistance, which should be abolished instead of expanded, but also to another concern about the invasion of Canadians' first-class mail.