

Oral Questions

ing country projects, can function, and this will be his primary responsibility.

Mr. Hees: I have one final comment, Mr. Speaker. I had no idea that things had deteriorated so much and were so bad.

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POST OFFICE**PROTEST BY UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS AGAINST LETTER CARRIERS SETTING UP A POSTAL SERVICE—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Postmaster General whether he has received a telegram from union officials of CUPW complaining that members of the letter carriers' union have set up their own postal service in the Nova Scotia region which, according to CUPW officials, is absolutely against the law?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have received such a telegram. I have suggested that a return telegram be sent to this official of CUPW suggesting that we have referred the matter to the Department of Justice for study, and they will move at their usual speedy pace—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: What will Basford say about that?

Mr. Mackasey:—which means a decision one of these days.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fairweather: That will help the Department of Justice.

Mr. Mackasey: In the meantime, one must commend certain Canadians for their initiative and wish them well.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mackasey: Similar operations are going on in, I suppose, about 20 centres that are now back to work. I would suggest to the official of CUPW who sent out the telegram that he spend a little more time in communication with his president and the negotiating team to resolve the very few differences that exist between our position and that of the union.

While I have the opportunity, I might suggest to the hon. gentleman who is the consumer critic for the opposition that in his question to the Prime Minister he has misrepresented the facts. The proposed settlement with CUPW is well within the guidelines.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Hold your press conference outside.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[Mr. Jamieson.]

NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD**ALLEGATION OF BIAS AGAINST CHAIRMAN OF BOARD IN CONNECTION WITH CERTAIN PIPELINE HEARINGS—GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION AT COURT HEARING**

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a very serious question to the Minister of Justice regarding an application now before the National Energy Board by Canadian Arctic Gas Pipeline Limited and Foothills Pipelines Limited of Calgary. A challenge objection has been filed by the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee. Has the Minister of Justice, his department or the government looked into this challenge of Mr. Marshall Crowe, chairman of that committee, to the effect that he may have some preconceived ideas in respect of the applications of these two major syndicates I have mentioned? This is an application or motion for prohibition which endeavours to prohibit the chairman from sitting. He is a graduate from western Canada and has held many high positions in the public service. I would also ask whether the Department of Justice intends to appear to make certain on behalf of the chairman that this is a fair and proper hearing before the court?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the matter to which he has referred has been referred by the National Energy Board to the Federal Court of Canada. At the present time I am considering what role the Attorney General of Canada should have at this hearing.

• (1130)

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, as this is generally a speedy and extraordinary remedy which is being taken, would the Minister of Justice be prepared, if he is not able to answer today on such a serious matter related to the question of energy, which is one of the important factors in reference to inflation, to answer in the very near future and put in a representation for counsel so that Mr. Crowe, who was appointed by the government as chairman of the National Energy Board, a board appointed by the former Conservative government, will get a fair hearing.

Mr. Basford: Mr. Speaker, in answering the first part of the hon. member's question as to whether we will give a speedy reply, the answer is yes. I am endeavouring to ensure that justice is speedy in this country.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY**ALLEGED EVIDENCE LARGE CORPORATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO INFLATION—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF EVIDENCE**

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. There was a report in today's *Globe and Mail* in which the deputy minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Dr. Sylvia Ostry, was quoted as saying:

It seems clear that at times large and powerful industries have played an important leadership role in the inflationary process. As well, there is considerable evidence that prices in concentrated industries are less responsive to changes in the general level of business activity.