

Oral Questions

alternatives to reduce services. I should like to ask him, first whether he feels it is important to hold a debate on postal services before making that decision and, second, whether he would rather have us proceed under the Access to Information legislation.

[English]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Canada Post): Mr. Speaker, I said we were examining a lot of alternatives. The Hon. Member knows that in order to comply with the request of the Minister of Finance to achieve self-sufficiency in the post office very shortly we have to examine these alternatives and take the best available. That is exactly what we will be doing, and we will do it without affecting services.

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EMPLOYMENT**LACK OF BRICKLAYERS IN MISSISSAUGA**

Mr. Bob Horner (Mississauga North): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Mississauga is booming. A hundred million dollars worth of building permits are issued each month. The problem is that construction companies cannot get any bricklayers. Will the Minister try to issue short-term visas or work permits for bricklayers in order to help alleviate the situation?

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we are indeed conscious of the prevailing situation in Mississauga, and in the Toronto area in general, concerning bricklayers. The Department has, through the Canada Employment Centres network and the National Job Bank, advertised the vacancies across the country. We are hoping this will alleviate the situation. In addition, officials of the Department will be meeting with the Toronto Home Builders Association next week to discuss what other steps might be taken to remedy the situation.

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● (1450)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**CANADA-UNITED STATES RELATIONS—HIRING OF MICHAEL DEAVER AS LOBBYIST**

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In an interview published this morning, Mr. Michael Deaver quoted Fred Doucet of the Prime Minister's Office as saying to him: "You know you're a hell of a guy, a guy Canadians ought to be thinking about", to which Mr. Deaver replied: "For God's sake, don't talk to me about that."

What possible explanation can be given for this comment by a senior official of the Prime Minister's Office which was obviously taken seriously by Mr. Deaver? Has the Minister properly investigated this exchange which is a clear breach of American law?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that the Hon. Member would be far happier if he were a member of the Congress or Senate of the United States so that he could pursue the issues that really interest him. Some of us from time to time think that this country would be better off under that circumstance as well. As the Member well knows, the comment read into the record of the House of Commons was a comment made in a light-hearted way by Dr. Doucet. It was interpreted that way by Mr. Deaver. Throughout this, the Government of Canada has respected the law of Canada and the United States. Any suggestion to the contrary is unworthy of a Member of this House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy: We have become quite used to the unworthy answers that we have received from the Minister. It is a serious question.

REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Considering that this is a matter that concerns the behaviour of a Canadian official in the Prime Minister's Office, has the Secretary of State for External Affairs properly investigated it to determine whether this is a violation of Canadian law? Is he prepared to report to this Parliament so that we know what our officials are doing in foreign countries, breaking the law?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I can report categorically to the House of Commons of Canada that the contract approved was in accordance with the law of Canada and with the law of the United States. I can also express my regret that the Hon. Member, perhaps inadvertently—since that is his custom—has been twisting words on this matter in the House and outside the House. That is conduct unworthy of a Member who wants to have the respect of the House of Commons and the people of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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HEALTH**MONITORING OF RADIOACTIVITY LEVELS IN CANADA FOLLOWING SOVIET NUCLEAR REACTOR ACCIDENT**

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Canadians from coast to coast are deeply worried and