

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, October 25, 1962

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

THE ROYAL ASSENT

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the house that I have received the following communication:

Ottawa, October 25, 1962.

Sir:

I have the honour to inform you that the Honourable Patrick Kerwin, P.C., Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, acting as Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General, will proceed to the Senate chamber today, the 25th October, at 5.45 p.m. for the purpose of giving royal assent to certain bills.

I have the honour to be,
sir,

Your obedient servant,
A. G. Cherrier,
Assistant Secretary to the Governor General.

PRIVILEGE

MR. HOWARD—ANSWER TO QUESTION
ON ORDER PAPER

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege concerning this house and all hon. members in it. My question of privilege involves an answer given yesterday to a question of mine, and may I preface it by pointing out that in *Hansard* for June 7, 1961, at page 5965, certain information was given in reply to a question by the hon. member for St. Denis indicating travelling expenses of the Postmaster General for the month of May to the extent of \$317.33, and indicating that certain other transportation was provided for the Postmaster General free of charge by government services.

Yesterday the question I asked, and which was answered, was as follows:

Did any members of the cabinet incur any travelling expenses between April 1, 1962, and June 30, 1962, inclusive?

To this the answer was yes. The second part of my question read:

If so, for each member of cabinet, what was, for each day, the amount of expenses incurred, the point or place travelled to, and the purpose of the visit?

The answer to this was:

The information available does not permit an answer to be given to this part of the question.

I submit, by virtue of the fact that a somewhat similar question was answered in 1961, this information is available, and my question of privilege is that the government is withholding information from parliament relating to travelling expenses of cabinet ministers and accordingly should be censured for it.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member, having raised a question of privilege and I having looked at the matter, I feel that there is not here a true question of privilege. It perhaps might be a grievance and it may have been treated as a question of grievance on a previous occasion. I think I would leave it at that so far as the hon. member's raising of it as a point of privilege is concerned.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CUBA—STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a short statement in regard to the Cuban situation. I do not intend to recapitulate the events of the last few days, all of which are known to hon. members. However, I think I should refer to President Kennedy's statement on Monday night that Russian action in placing missiles and bombers in Cuba threatens this continent and Central and South America. Indeed, the Soviet union by its action has reached out across the Atlantic to challenge the right of free men to live in peace in this hemisphere.

I think Canadians are in general agreement that these offensive weapons, located so contiguously to our continent are a direct and immediate menace to Canada. Furthermore, they are a serious menace to the deterrent strategic strength of the whole western alliance on which our security is founded. The result is that a threat is posed not only to this continent but to the NATO alliance as a whole, and indeed to all the free world, whose security depends to such an extent upon the strategic strength of the United States.

The United States government, as I have said on an earlier occasion, informed us of the facts of the situation and of the course of action proposed to be taken some few hours before President Kennedy made his announcement.