

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Lewis: Then I repeat my question, Mr. Speaker, which was whether or not the minister will revert to the procedures used prior to February 9 in view of the findings of the adjudicator.

Mr. Kierans: Mr. Speaker, the adjudicator has not asked us to make any change from the single mail processing system. The adjudicator has asked us simply to ensure that there be more consultation prior to issuing new directives, and with this I am heartily in accord. I agree with the spirit—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Did the Postmaster General have no knowledge of the contents of the report until he read the report when it was issued on July 4?

Mr. Kierans: Not a word, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, which I should like to direct to the Minister of Labour. On March 18, as reported at page 6742 of *Hansard*, the Postmaster General replied in the affirmative when he was asked whether "the services and the ability of his colleague, the Minister of Labour, are being used" in the handling of the postal dispute. My question is this: When does the minister intend to dissociate himself publicly from the arrogant and high-handed labour tactics of his colleague the Postmaster General?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Stanfield: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Did the Postmaster General mean to indicate that he had asked through the appropriate channels for this report before July 4, that he had failed to get a copy and that one was withheld from him until July 4?

Mr. Kierans: Mr. Speaker, from the beginning of May I kept asking how long it would take to get the adjudicator's report. From then on I kept asking whether the adjudicator's report was in yet, and so on. That is exactly what I meant by my reply.

Mr. Stanfield: A further supplementary question. To whom did the minister direct his inquiries, and what reasons were given for the delay?

[Mr. Speaker.]

Mr. Kierans: I inquired of my officials, including the deputy minister, asking them to find out whether there was any information as to when the report would be forthcoming.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, in view of the statement made earlier by the Postmaster General, that the blame for the delay in getting these reports was to be placed on the Public Service Staff Relations Board, and in view of the fact that that board comes under the authority of the Privy Council, may I ask the President of the Privy Council whether he can give us the reason for the delay?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I would be glad, as the Acting Prime Minister has indicated, to make an investigation into this matter, and I will respond in due course.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether he would discuss with the Prime Minister the possibility of reactivating the task force on information to inquire into the secrecy and furtiveness practised by this government?

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the President of the Privy Council? Now that it appears that the house itself will not have an opportunity to discuss this matter, will he take the initiative to have this newly revealed report, which must have been sent by mail, referred to an appropriate standing committee before negotiations begin, so that the committee may look at the report?

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps I shall allow one more supplementary, after which we might go to another subject. Perhaps we may return to this matter in a few minutes. For the time being I recognize the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I merely wish to ask the Postmaster General if he can tell us on what date he received the two reports.

Mr. Kierans: Mr. Speaker, I heard a verbal report of the reports on Friday night. I studied the reports this morning.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): They must have been sent by mail.