

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

recent increases in civil service salaries awarded to all civil servants? If not, can the information be given as to what individuals, groups or classifications were not given the increase, and why?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I think that is a question that should appear on the order paper. I do not think the Minister of Finance or his assistant could be expected to have an immediate answer for that question.

**Mr. Knowles:** May I point out, Mr. Speaker, that I did send notice, and an indication was given to me by the parliamentary assistant that he was prepared to answer it.

**Mr. Speaker:** Under the rules of the house it is a question which should appear on the order paper.

**LABOUR CONDITIONS**

**INTERNATIONAL UNION OF MINE AND SMELTER WORKERS—ORGANIZING ACTIVITIES AT YELLOWKNIFE AND PORT RADIUM**

On the orders of the day:

**Mrs. Ellen L. Fairclough (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Labour. Has he any information as to the organizing activities reputedly being carried on by the international union of mine, mill and smelter workers at Yellowknife and Port Radium?

**Hon. Milton F. Gregg (Minister of Labour):** The department and the minister have some information on the matter, yes.

**Mrs. Fairclough:** I can understand the minister may not wish to give that information now, but may I have a copy of it?

**Mr. Gregg:** I assure the hon. member that I did not intend to be discourteous. We have information on the subject, and I shall be glad to provide any information I feel is pertinent to what my hon. friend desires. It will be done early next week.

**POSTAL SERVICE**

**INCREASE OF RATES ON CIRCULARS, PRINTED MATTER, ETC.**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. William Bryce (Selkirk):** I should like to ask a question of the Postmaster General. Have certain postal rates been increased, and some of them doubled? If so, why has parliament not been notified or consulted? How does this fit in with the economy program announced by the department?

**Hon. Edouard Rinfret (Postmaster General):** The hon. member for Selkirk was good enough to send me notice of his question about five minutes ago.

[Mr. Knowles.]

**Mr. Bryce:** On a point of order, I sent it at eleven o'clock this morning.

**An hon. Member:** By post?

**Mr. Rinfret:** Certain postal rates have been increased recently and have been duly announced in the *Canada Gazette*. The rates on circulars and printed matter have been increased. The old rate was one cent for each two ounces or fraction thereof. The increased rate is two cents for the first two ounces, and one cent for each additional two ounces or fraction thereof. This old rate had been in existence since 1904. The purpose of the increase has to do with the third question the hon. member asked, because it is part of the economy program of the department. First of all it is to be used to pay off the deficit that is being encountered at the present time by the department, to the extent of about \$2,250,000 on the printed matter alone. It also has to do with the economy program, in that with this increased rate it is the estimate of the department that the amount of printed matter sent by mail will be decreased by approximately twenty-five per cent, and to that extent the letter carriers will be relieved of the loads they have to carry at the present time.

The second increase that has been made is in connection with parcel post rates. This is a quite complicated matter, and has already been announced in the *Canada Gazette*. The third increase that has been made recently is in registration fees. They have been increased from 10 cents to 20 cents on the first \$25 indemnity, and a relative increase over that amount. The average cost of registration in Canada at the present time is 23 cents. We were losing money on each one of those registrations in the lower denominations.

The hon. member's second question was as to why parliament had not been notified or consulted. According to section 7(e) of the Post Office Act, the Postmaster General has the discretion to fix the rates on all mailable matter except first-class mail, newspapers, magazines and the like. The reason, I imagine, for this discretion being given to the Postmaster General is that in connection with first-class mail, newspapers and magazines the postal department has a complete monopoly, whereas in connection with other matters, such as circulars and registration fees, parcel post and the like, we are in competition with other companies doing a similar business, and we have to have authority to act quickly if a condition develops that requires speedy action.