

• (2:40 p.m.)

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

TABLING OF REPORT ON PARLIAMENTARY RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I would like to lay on the table of the House a report on parliamentary retirement allowances prepared by Dr. C. A. Curtis, Emeritus Dean of Queen's University, and delivered to my colleague, the President of the Treasury Board.

[Translation]

Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, while we are still on motions, I would ask the Postmaster General and Minister of Communications (Mr. Kierans) if he could not avail himself of this opportunity to make a statement concerning the postal situation, with regard to both the G. Lapalme Inc. case and the postal union which would permit hon. members to ask questions in due course.

Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Postmaster General and Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I will be ready to answer any kind of question.

[English]

STATUTE LAW (SUPPLEMENTARY RETIREMENT BENEFITS) AMENDMENT ACT, 1970

MEASURE TO SUPPLEMENT PENSIONS

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-194, to provide supplementary retirement benefits for certain persons in receipt of pensions payable out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and to amend certain Acts that provide for the payment of those pensions.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

CONTINUANCE OF OPERATIONS OF E.M.I. COSSOR PLANT—TAKEOVER OF FAIREY AVIATION

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I had a question or two for the Prime Minister, but I really could not expect them to be within the knowledge

Inquiries of the Ministry

of an Acting Prime Minister, so I would ask the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I am at a complete loss to understand how anybody could take any offence at that. It is a simple statement of fact—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: To make it clear, Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to cast any aspersion on the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I simply meant to state the information would be peculiarly within the knowledge of the Prime Minister.

I would like to ask the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion whether his department proposes to take any steps to assure the continuance of the operations of the plant owned by E.M.I. Cossor in the Halifax region? I ask this question not only because of its regional significance but because in the closure of this plant, along with the closure of Fairey Aviation, the Department of National Defence would seem to have a very acute interest.

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I think that the Acting Prime Minister would be the most competent one to answer, but if the Leader of the Opposition would be satisfied with a less informative answer I can inform the House that a few departments here in Ottawa are negotiating right now with the government of Nova Scotia, and we hope we can keep this plant in use.

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question. Let us find out whether the Acting Prime Minister can answer as intelligently. Can the Acting Prime Minister indicate—

An hon. Member: Have you got an intelligent question?

Mr. Forrestall: I do have a fairly intelligent question, Mr. Speaker. I think it is fairly intelligent. I want to ask the Acting Prime Minister whether or not the government is taking any steps to protect Canada's financial investment on research, development, modification and sophistication of the variable depth sonar? Has the government taken any steps to protect that expertise for Canadian use?