

Oral Questions

Hon. Daniel J. MacDonald (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, to answer that question, it is not very long since I visited Toronto. I spoke to approximately 100 patients at Sunnybrook Hospital. They were very satisfied with the treatment they were receiving. So far as I know there are ample beds at this time. If there are not, we can certainly look into it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition. The hon. member for Témiscamingue wishes to put a supplementary question, after which I will recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Last evening, on the CBC French network, Mr. René Lévesque stated that the Prime Minister would be resigning on November 15 next. Since when does the Prime Minister notify René Lévesque of his intentions before parliament?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will admit, I am sure, that it is not a point of order.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, as Mr. René Lévesque, take their wishes for granted. Some people think that the representation of French-speaking persons in Ottawa is too strong, but such is not my opinion, Mr. Speaker. As for myself, I intend to continue to carry on my duties—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

POSITION OF MINISTER RESPECTING DELIVERY OF OIL
BY TANKERS TO PUGET SOUND REFINERIES

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, before I ask my question perhaps I could assure the Prime Minister, through you, that many in parliament will find that a comforting reassurance.

I should like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs a question arising from his assurance a number of months ago in connection with the delivery of oil to refineries in the Puget Sound area that he had only begun to fight. Can he tell us briefly how that fight is coming on or whether he has really left the ring?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, like the Prime Minister I intend to stay very much in the fight.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

Mr. Bell: On a question of privilege.

[Mr. Scott.]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member rises on a question of privilege. Before I recognize the hon. member I would remind hon. members that we have reached the end of the question period. However, I recognize the hon. member on his question of privilege.

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, as recorded on page 7085 of *Hansard* for yesterday, column one, I made an interjection that I meant to reflect on the government, but I may have brought in a respected civil servant with a distinguished war record. I have been assured that the Assistant Deputy Minister of Hospitals resigned voluntarily for health reasons and that there was no implication of policy. Therefore I would withdraw that without reservation. Needless to say, I am still opposed to the government's policy of closing down veterans hospitals.

Mr. Marshall: On a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member rises on a point of order.

Mr. Marshall: Mr. Speaker, in his answer the Minister of Veterans Affairs suggested that morale was high and that the service was as good as it should be—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Just listen.

Mr. Marshall: I think there should be a change because certainly many representations are coming to members of parliament and, indeed, to the minister indicating dissatisfaction in respect of the handing over of hospitals and indicating dissatisfaction with the services in the hospitals.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member will appreciate that this is a point of debate and not a point of order. I suggest again to hon. members that it is irregular after the question period to seek supplementaries on alleged points of order. I appreciate that the hon. member may feel he has a grievance in relation to the answer given to his question, but that cannot be raised by way of a point of order or question or privilege.

Mr. Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to rise on a point of order but I believe the issue is of national importance. I just received information a few moments ago that the Texaco and Imperial Oil Companies are diverting tankers from the Middle East to the United States. In light of that I wonder whether I might have the permission of the House to ask the Prime Minister whether or not he is aware of this?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure we could have a situation every day in which hon. members receive information during the question period and seek unanimous consent of the House to prolong the question period. I suggest to hon. members that is irregular. I am sure the hon. member can go to the minister, speak to him and obtain the information he is seeking.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order or perhaps I rise to give notice of a point of order having to do with the attaching of the Governor General's recommendation to a bill, first reading