

*Routine Proceedings*

just going to have to wait for us to take the time to dig out the information that he requests.

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact, that was not the question that I was referring to. I was referring to Question No. 182. I referred to Question No. 162 as well. It is the one that is 90 days. Question No. 182 has been there for more than 45 days.

I have just noticed that another question standing in my name has been there since December 6. This one is merely to ask the names of the notaries working for the Federal Business Development Bank. That list should be available in something like 15 minutes. The question has been on the Order Paper in excess of 45 days.

The government has now confessed that one out of every five priority questions is not answered in accordance with the rules. They are deficient close to 20 per cent of the time by the government's own admission. In my case, all of the questions that are on the Order Paper in my name except one have exceeded the 45 days and none of them have been answered yet.

**Mr. Cooper:** First, I want to correct a couple of things. I did not say that 82.8 per cent of the questions were filed on time or responded to on time. I said that 82.8 per cent of those questions have been responded to. There are at the moment a few late and I am quite prepared to concede that. We are on top of those on a regular basis.

If the hon. member is referring to question No. 197, he did not simply ask for the names of the lawyers and the notaries for FBDB, he wanted to know all the fees paid to them and that does take time.

In all fairness, we on this side our best to answer these questions on time. I personally try to make sure that they are answered on time, but when members continue to ask questions that require very detailed responses, that require checking and verifying with a number of individuals and offices, it becomes practically impossible for us to meet the 45 day deadline. We will continue at every occasion to do our best.

**Mr. Milliken:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the difficulty faced by the parliamentary secretary. I know he has

trouble sometimes with the questions asked of him, but he has some statistics. He told us what percentage of questions he had answered. I wonder if he could also tell us the number of 45 day questions that were answered late; in other words, the percentage of the 82 per cent that he has answered that were in fact beyond the 45 day limit. Is it 90 per cent of them or 95 per cent of them? Could he give us that breakdown as well?

**Mr. Speaker:** I do not of course want to bring this brilliant debate to a close because these are matters of importance and the number of questions that a member puts on the Order Paper often reflects the diligence of that member. The rule is there to be followed unless there is very good reason why the government cannot manage it in the time.

I appreciate the comment of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands that he appreciates the position in which the parliamentary secretary finds himself. I think that the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell has made a point and the parliamentary secretary knows that he is being pressed. I am sure that he will pass that message on.

If it is of any help, the parliamentary secretary could also remind those who have to get these answers that the rule, as I have said before, was not put in the book to lie in abeyance or to exist in a vacuum. It is there as a direction to the government and to the bureaucracy to respond as adequately and as quickly as they can to questions which must be deemed serious.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands asks another very detailed and complicated question. I would hope that he could handle that issue on a matter of personal negotiation with the parliamentary secretary because it might take quite a long time to find the answer to the question that he has asked.

I think I will leave it with the parliamentary secretary to do everything he can to obtain from others the kind of co-operation that is in keeping with the spirit of the rule.

Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Orders of the day.