

Order Paper Questions

[Translation]

QUESTION PASSED AS ORDER FOR RETURN

Mr. J.-J. Blais (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, if question No. 3,858 could be made an order for return, the document could be tabled immediately.

[Text]

LANGUAGE TRAINING

Question No. 3,858—**Mr. Bowden:**

1. How much will the government be spending in the current fiscal year for language training courses?
2. How many members of the Public Service will participate in such courses?
3. How many days were involved in public servants taking language courses?
4. How many public servants, within their last two years prior to retirement have taken language training courses in the current fiscal year?
5. What reason was given for the \$36,000 loss by Statistics Canada through a language training contract for which no service was received?
6. How many Statistics Canada employees were needed to meet the guaranteed minimum and how many actually participated in a language training course?
7. What are the criteria for measuring the success of the language training courses?
8. According to the criteria in Part 7, what percentage of public servants have successfully completed each grade of language training and have achieved an acceptable level of fluency in the language studied?

Return tabled.

[English]

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, during the past two days I have been making a study of the number of questions that the parliamentary secretary routinely asks the House to make orders for return. Then I looked at the questions to see what kind of answers were given. Unless there is some justification given in the House, I feel that they should not be made orders for return automatically, either because of the length of the answer or for some other reason. Those answers are buried in the office downstairs, and often they are the most embarrassing to the government.

I suggest that there be a change in the procedure and that the hon. member should explain why he is asking for the extraordinary procedure of making them orders for returns. It is only an exception to the request where an answer is written. Therefore, I think the House should watch this matter very carefully, and I would ask the parliamentary secretary to justify his reasons every time he asks for this procedure to be followed.

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, may I say, on that point, that we do not attempt to have a reply to a question made an order for return unless we feel—

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Unless the House feels.

Mr. Blais:—unless we feel that there is too much material to be printed in *Hansard*. We simply move to have the question made an order for return if the reply is voluminous. The hon. member is free to request, as he has

[Mr. MacEachen.]

done on a number of occasions, some explanation as to why, in a specific instance, there is need to make a question an order for return. I simply wish to indicate to him that in the past few days we have had a number of voluminous replies, even though they may have been partial answers to questions. In those instances it was justifiable to seek permission of the House to make them orders for returns, and that permission was always granted.

As to whether the answers are buried in the depths of this chamber, may I point out to the hon. gentleman that the hon. member who seeks a reply, whether the answer is printed in *Hansard* or made an order for return, receives a complete copy of the return upon its being tabled in the House. Yesterday I must have sought permission to get 12 replies made orders for returns, and I fail to see why in all instances I should enumerate the reason we wish to make orders for return in the case of answers, some of which are 40 pages long. I find it unjustifiable. The way we have proceeded in the past is reasonable. It generally has met with the approval of the House, and to my recollection the only one who has objected from time to time has been the hon. member for Edmonton West.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The point has been raised many times before. It is the normal practice of the House that the parliamentary secretary should seek leave of the House that certain questions be made orders for return, to which the House must give its consent. It is the right of any member who feels aggrieved, either by the individual application of the practice in general, to withhold that consent. It has been suggested in the past that that procedure be altered. That suggestion, I hope by automatic process and with guidance from the Chair from time to time, has been passed along for the consideration of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization.

Until there is consensus forthcoming from the House on the need for a change in the procedure, it would seem that the practice must continue. If, however, any hon. member feels aggrieved either by the individual application of that practice or by the practice in general, he always has the right to withhold agreement to the request by the parliamentary secretary for leave of the House to make an individual order for return.

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

● (1510)

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 26

[English]

ANTI-INFLATION ACT

DECISION OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPECTING IRVING PULP AND PAPER DISPUTE

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to move, seconded by the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez), the adjournment of the House under the provisions of Standing Order 26 for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring