

TRADE

SHIPMENT OF HELICOPTER PARTS TO IRAN—RELEASE OF AMERICAN HOSTAGES

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Hamilton East just reminded me that one should never send a boy to do a man's job.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Beatty: Sit down then.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Johnston: My question is on another subject, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister I will return to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: Where is the babysitter, Don?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Hon. Member.

Mr. Johnston: In September, 1985, Mr. Speaker, four days after Pratt & Whitney received an order from Iran for helicopter parts, an American hostage was released. On November 2 of this year an American hostage was released approximately two weeks after Pratt & Whitney shipped helicopter parts to Iran. Does the Deputy Prime Minister agree with that chronology? Does the Government believe or suspect that there is a relationship between the shipments from Pratt & Whitney to Iran and the release of American hostages?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is suggesting some very serious motivations here, motivations which I do not share and which the Government does not share.

UNITED STATES-CANADA CONSULTATIONS INQUIRY

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister has repeatedly over the last several days refused to answer a very straight question, namely, were there representations or consultations made by or with the American Government and the Canadian Government with respect to these export commissions for shipments from Pratt & Whitney to Iran? Did they take place?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I answered that question in the House on Monday, and the answer is no.

Oral Questions

REVENUE CANADA

CONFIDENTIALITY OF TAX RETURNS—STATEMENT MADE BY MEMBER FOR SAINT-LÉONARD—ANJOU

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue. Yesterday in the House the Member for St. Léonard—Anjou stated, as found on page 1275 of *Hansard*:

At my request this morning a woman telephoned the Revenue Canada office in Montreal. She gave my name, my social insurance number, my address, my date of birth. She was able to get into my 1985 income tax return.

Has the Minister checked into the circumstances and can he indicate to the House if that is really what happened?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, as the House would expect, I took the representation from my colleague very seriously. I did cause a very thorough inquiry to be made. As my colleague indicated, calls were made at 10.43 a.m. and at 10.59 a.m. Our Department has ways to authenticate and to find out which employee accessed every taxpayer's file. However, what my colleague from Saint-Léonard—Anjou failed to say is that there were three additional key elements of information supplied by the callers to authenticate the validity of the request. They were volunteered or requested and correctly provided by the caller. The information was on the Member's income tax return, and because of the secrecy provisions of the Income Tax Act, I would not, and I know he would not want me to say what they were.

However, I believe that the record should be cleared, not to minimize the seriousness of what has occurred, but to point out to my colleague from Saint-Léonard—Anjou that under the circumstances he did not give the full story and in so doing has needlessly alarmed, I suggest to him with respect, millions of Canadians.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I think it is quite apparent to Hon. Members that as a consequence of that question and answer the Hon. Member concerned is rising. I would think he probably has a question of privilege to raise. I want to advise Hon. Members that since the rules were changed questions of privilege are not taken at this time. I do want to assure the Hon. Member, however, that I will hear him later.

Is the Hon. Member rising on a supplemental question?

MINISTER'S REPLY

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard—Anjou): Mr. Speaker, my supplemental question is for the Minister of National Revenue. Yesterday I said that a woman made a phone call, gave my social insurance number, my address and my date of birth, and had access to my income tax return for 1985. That is what I said exactly. The difference between what the Minister is saying and what I said—