

Oral Questions

An Hon. Member: Listen and learn.

Mr. Trudeau: We have budgeted more than \$1 billion in order to create jobs for young people.

As to using the time of the House on television, the Hon. Member and her colleagues are giving the answer. There is no way in this House that you can give a message of hope and a positive message to Canadians without the group opposite—both groups opposite—trying to say how terrible things are and will continue to be in Canada. That is the reason. The people of Canada do not want to hear only negativism. That is why half the time spent in this House of Commons is wasted on the people of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: It is the democratic way, Pierre.

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● (1450)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

REQUEST FOR ANNOUNCEMENT OF CENTRAL NOVA BY-ELECTION DATE

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. On November 1, 1948, in order to accommodate the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, a riding was vacated; the Prime Minister directed the warrant be issued to the Chief Electoral Officer the same day; and the writ was issued the following day, November 2.

I provided the Acting Prime Minister yesterday with the Stanfield precedent in September, 1967, which saw the lapse of only one day between the vacancy and the calling of the election. In accordance with the practices and customs of this place, could he now announce the date of the by-election in Central Nova to accommodate the election of the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, Mr. Mulroney?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I attempted to deal with that question earlier this week when I indicated that I expected to bring the matter to Cabinet this week, or next. I will bring it to Cabinet tomorrow and, if a decision is made, I will make the announcement at the next sitting of this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: It is understandable to hear the howls of glee from the back benches of the Government Party; they really do not appreciate the practices and traditions of the House of Commons.

CITING OF PRECEDENTS

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, when the Prime Minister is considering doing the proper thing, will he also have regard, in addition to the precedents I have already cited, to December 27, 1921, when the resignation of the Hon. Member for Grenville, Ontario caused a vacancy? Again the warrant was issued on the same day as the declaration of the vacancy, and the writ was also issued on the same day, December 27, 1921?

Perhaps, if he is not convinced by that precedent, he might have regard to the most recent one of July 2, 1981, when the then Hon. Member for Spadina, Mr. Stollery, was appointed to the Senate. On July 2 that seat was declared vacant; on July 2, the same day, the Prime Minister caused the warrant to be issued; and on July 3, the very next day, the writ calling the election was issued. Will the Prime Minister cease this game of chicken, abide by the practices established in this place, and announce the by-election today or, at the very latest, tomorrow?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I said from the outset that we hoped a chance would be given to the new Leader of the New Democratic Party to take a seat in this House—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You are thinking of the wrong convention.

Mr. Nielsen: Don't anticipate.

Mr. Wilson: You know something we don't know?

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, those two Parties opposite are so united in their negativism that I confuse them sometimes. But I did say that we hoped an occasion would be given to the new Leader of the Conservative Party to contest a seat in this place very soon, and that is still my intention. Perhaps the Hon. Member for Yukon wants to hold me to a matter of days. I tell him that we began from opposite points of view in this matter. We on this side were rather happy with the present Leader of the Conservative Party; apparently he is anxious to ditch his job and go on to better things. We will try to accommodate him as soon as possible. I am sure everyone in the House will share his view that he should leave very soon.

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PENITENTIARIES

UNIVERSITY COURSES FOR INMATES—STUDY INTO PAYMENT OF FEES

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Solicitor General. He knows that we are very concerned to see post-secondary programs in Canadian penitentiaries being continued, programs which have been more successful than any other the Department has tried.