

Oral Questions

Mr. Paproski: Mr. Speaker, when does the Prime Minister plan to meet with Mr. Lévesque to discuss Canada's future?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

ALLEGED LIST OF PUBLIC SERVANTS FORMING
EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION—GOVERNMENT
POSITION

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, I have a question that is supplemental to one asked by my colleague, the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River, which I should like to direct to the Minister of National Defence who, on October 13 of last year, as reported at page 18 of *Hansard*, speaking as the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, stated in respect of the existence of an alleged list or blacklist of public servants who can be called the extra parliamentary opposition:

Fortunately, it is without any foundation.

I wonder whether the minister has made any inquiries, and does he still hold to that position?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I cannot see how that could be directed to the minister's responsibilities in connection with national defence.

Mr. MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct this question to the minister in his capacity as Minister of National Defence, and I submit it is equally applicable.

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, my answer still stands. I am aware of no such list.

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TRANSPORT

EFFECT OF SUBSIDIZATION OF PRIVATE SHIPPING FIRMS ON
MOVEMENT OF GOODS THROUGH NORTH SYDNEY

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister of Transport is related to the hearings he gave and the concern he showed the delegation from North Sydney here in Ottawa and in respect of the meetings held on the docks in North Sydney by the union regarding layoffs and cutbacks at the North Sydney wharf. Would the minister cause an inquiry to be carried out to determine the effect that the subsidization of private shipping firms from the public purse is having on the shipment of goods through the Port of North Sydney in competition with a Crown corporation, namely, the Canadian National Railways, thereby causing massive unemployment at that port? This is a matter we have been pursuing for many months in an attempt to get some answers.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that I share his concern about employment in the Sydney area. Indeed, I have taken some action in that regard in recent weeks. In this particular case, we have undertaken with several provincial governments to look at the question and the impact on employment of the movement of goods from the maritime provinces proper to Newfoundland. That is, of course, a subject which may also receive some attention in connection with the work of the proposed commission.

● (1450)

Mr. Muir: I thank the minister for his answer. May I ask him, if he is too busy—I realize he has a large portfolio—if he would assign one of his senior officials to pinpoint the specific problem in that it is asserted that the shipping firms are definitely taking business from the port of North Sydney to the detriment of the stevedores there and that only one quarter of the force of approximately 1,000 men is working.

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, since this matter is being discussed with several of the provinces, it is a matter which already has the attention of several of my officials.

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[Translation]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

INQUIRY WHETHER PORT WILL BE CONSTRUCTED AT
ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELEINE FOR TRANSPORTATION OF SALT

Mr. Albert Béchard (Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

Would the minister tell the House and Quebecers particularly if the negotiations with Quebec authorities aimed at an agreement concerning the economic development of the Gaspé peninsula, the lower St. Lawrence area and the Magdalen Islands still include, as before the November 15 event, the appropriation of important federal funds for the operation of a salt mine—which, incidentally, was discovered before November 15, 1976—and the development of a seaport at Grosse Isle, Magdalen Islands, in order to export the products of this mine to the Quebec, Canadian and other markets?

Hon. Marcel Lessard (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, the operation of a salt mine in the Magdalen Islands was indeed and still is one of the points under discussion which was considered by my department as part of a possible joint program of both Quebec and Ottawa governments for the development of these regions. I think this point will still be discussed. We said at the time that this was a real regional development opportunity.