

Oral Questions

Mr. Trudeau: Apparently, he was not—

Mr. Deans: I am.

Mr. Trudeau: —because he went on to some other subject. He referred to the people of Canada and no longer to Senator Olson.

As far as the people of Canada are concerned, there are other policies which can be followed. The premiers of most of the provinces proposed such a policy last February. It was that we lower the value of the dollar, perhaps to 75 cents, perhaps lower—who knows? That might temporarily bring down interest rates. It would certainly be only temporary; but, anyhow, that debate is open. I have not heard the views of the hon. member from the New Democratic Party on that matter.

Mr. Deans: Oh, yes, you have, many times.

Mr. Trudeau: Is he proposing a 75-cent dollar or a 70-cent dollar? Which is he proposing?

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[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. ISMAËL TOURÉ, MINISTER OF MINES AND GEOLOGY OF THE POPULAR AND REVOLUTIONARY REPUBLIC OF GUINEA

Madam Speaker: I have the honour of drawing the attention of the House to the distinguished presence in our gallery of His Excellency, Mr. Ismaël Touré, Minister of Mines and Geology of the Popular and Revolutionary Republic of Guinea.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[English]

POLITICAL PARTIES

LIBERAL SUPPORT FOR MINISTER OF FINANCE

Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. The minister knows that an increasing number of members of his own caucus are abandoning their support. The Prime Minister has just said that the reason is that they are as Liberal as they are, and I suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that the reason is that they are as scared as they are. In any event, can the minister tell the House how many Liberal MPs and Liberal cabinet ministers no longer support the finance minister? In other words, could we have the latest count?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I do not go around

applying a loyalty test, as must be the practice in the Conservative Party.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: The hon. member asks how many Liberal members support the policies of the government. I refer him to the rather numerous votes which have been taken when motions have been moved by the opposition condemning government policies, and which have been joined in by Liberal members. That is the latest count. Every motion that is brought forward is defeated by Liberal members.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, we are not interested in the very significant difference between those Liberals who do not agree and those Liberals who vote for it anyway.

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY LIBERAL CAUCUS MEMBERS

Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Madam Speaker, I want to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Finance. On February 3, in a public letter, ministers and members of the Liberal caucus stated that measures must be taken as soon as possible as they are necessary right now. In April the minutes of a meeting of the ministers' own caucus were headed, "A sense of urgency", and stated the need to act quickly, and last week there were more comments urging action. Can the minister advise whether any of the recommendations from the Liberal caucus will be acted upon? It seems a shame to find that they are just wasting their time.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I do not think it is really the hon. member's business to inquire into the business of the Liberal caucus, and it is not the business of the House of Commons to inquire into the business of the Liberal caucus.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

QUERY RESPECTING LIBERAL MEMBERS' SUGGESTION ON INTEREST RATE POLICY

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, my question is also directed to the embattled Minister of Finance, who finds that he has as many critics behind him right now as he has in front of him.

Some hon. Members: Not so.

Miss MacDonald: I would like to ask the minister about the group of Liberal dissidents who met on May 18 and advocated, at that meeting, the adoption of a realistic interest rate policy. Since they obviously feel that the present interest rate is not realistic, has the minister called them in and asked them what they mean by a realistic interest rate policy? When will he take steps to introduce a realistic interest rate policy?