

## Oral Questions

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

## LABOUR CONDITIONS

## ALLEGATIONS AGAINST SEAFARERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION—GOVERNMENT POSITION ON REQUEST FOR INDEPENDENT INQUIRY

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is directed to the Prime Minister who was unavoidably absent from the House in the last few days. Is he now prepared to recommend an independent inquiry regarding charges of intimidation and violence with respect to the SIU, and also with regard to the handling of these matters by the federal government? Is he prepared to recommend such an inquiry in view of the specific allegations, and accusations that have now been made and indeed telecast to the nation?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I must confess I am not aware of the specific allegations and accusations that the Leader of the Opposition talks about which have been broadcast to the nation. I have consulted with the House leader, who was Acting Prime Minister during my absence, and I stand completely by the statements he made on the matter of an investigation on Wednesday or Thursday of last week.

**Mr. Stanfield:** In view of the obvious truth in what was said, I think last week, by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands regarding the importance of the government not only being honest but appearing to be honest and the importance of the government being so regarded in the country, I should like to ask the Prime Minister what action his government intends to take to deal with these charges, with the charge, for example, that was repeated and asserted on the national network last evening that a member of the government was in the pocket of the SIU.

**Mr. Trudeau:** I must confess that I was not listening to the national network last night. I do not know who made the charge; I do not know whether that person is worthy of testifying before the House. I do not know if the Leader of the Opposition himself supports that charge.

**Mr. Stanfield:** It is not a question of whether or not I support the charge.

**Some hon. Members:** Why not?

**Mr. Stanfield:** I am very concerned about the situation.

**An hon. Member:** Make the charge.

**Mr. Stanfield:** A very serious charge has been made.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**An hon. Member:** What charge?

**Mr. Stanfield:** A charge has been made casting a very heavy cloud over the government. There is absolutely no use in members opposite asking me to make a charge. I do not intend to make a charge. That is not my responsibility.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[Mr. Speaker.]

**Mr. Stanfield:** But it is my responsibility to press the government to clear up these matters.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## ALLEGATIONS AGAINST SEAFARERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION—ACTION OF MINISTER OF LABOUR WITH REGARD TO STATEMENTS ON TELEVISION PROGRAM

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Labour. I want to say to him quite frankly that I thought the program went too far. Is it the minister's intention to proceed against the network for defamation of character.

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** I can only advise the Leader of the Opposition that I have developed and am developing a transcript of the program. I have not decided as of now what action I might take.

● (1430)

I might advise the Leader of the Official Opposition when he quotes a particular charge repeated in the newspaper this morning about the minister in the SIU's pocket—with reference to the importance of that, I think it was last Wednesday night in the Ontario legislature that Dr. Shulman said I was not the minister in the SIU's pocket, so I do not know which unreliable source the Leader of the Opposition is relying upon.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I just want to assure the hon. Minister of Labour that I am basing my question on what I saw and heard on the national network last night.

**An hon. Member:** Hearsay!

**Mr. Stanfield:** I am very anxious to know what measures the government is going to take to clear up the matter or failing action of the government, what action the minister himself is going to take?

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated that in my own terms I have noticed such a great deal of innuendo, implication and total irrelevancies being played up to such a high degree that I just do not know what action to take. I just hope the type of conduct that seems so prevalent in some quarters will not be repeated in this House.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

## PROPRIETY OF DONATION BY SEAFARERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION TO CAMPAIGN OF MINISTER OF LABOUR—FAILURE TO CONSULT PRIME MINISTER

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Would the Prime Minister indicate if it meets standards acceptable to him for a member of his cabinet to accept campaign funds from the Seafarers' International Union, the operations of which come under his jurisdiction bearing in mind that the SIU, a subject of controversy for 25 years has in the past year