

Oral Questions

a quote attributed to the Minister of National Defence found in the current issue of *Maclean's*:

Discussing the fate of the Indians and Eskimos, he will suddenly puzzle, "I mean, what did they ever do for Canada? Did they discover gas? Did they discover oil? They didn't even invent the wheel. Why, when we came here, they were still dragging things around on two sticks."

I think that is shameful.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Firth: I think that the native people of this country deserve an apology, and I think the minister's statements should be explained to the House. Indians and Eskimos continue to make contributions to the Canadian people. The explorers who first came here would not have survived without the help of the native people.

● (1500)

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, a question of privilege. The accusation of the hon. member is correct but it should be directed to the author of that article. There was no quotation by me in those terms. I would ask the hon. member to look at the statements I have made which are on public record about the native people of this country. I would ask him to look at the first time I accepted nomination in 1968 and I will send him a transcript because those are my real views and not as expressed in that article. There were many other inaccuracies in that article as well.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Rimouski.

Mr. Firth: Mr. Speaker, on the same question of privilege—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member has been seen on the question of privilege which he put forward and I permitted the hon. minister who was involved in the question to make a comment as well. The hon. member, of course, is raising a question of great importance. It is difficult to see how it becomes a question of privilege in respect of the operations of members of the House at this moment. In any case, the hon. member has exposed the point and the hon. Minister has replied and this would seem to be as far as it can go in that context. The hon. member may wish to pursue the matter further in another way.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for the Northwest Territories raised a matter and the Minister of National Defence replied to the effect that he should take it up with the author of the article. I think the way in which the hon. member for the Northwest Territories raised the point demands that the Minister of National Defence, if he did not make this statement, should categorically deny it.

An hon. Member: He did.

[Mr. Firth.]

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Speaker, I just did deny that in the most categorical and definite terms.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Rimouski.

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[Translation]

INCOME TAX

JUSTIFICATION FOR THOSE IN HIGH INCOME BRACKETS
PAYING LESS TAX THAN THOSE IN LOWER BRACKETS

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

In view of the fact that certain people with an annual income of \$200,000 and over are taxed at a rate not exceeding 10 per cent, that the average taxpayer earning \$7,000 a year is taxed at a rate of 12.14 per cent, and that horse owners will be allowed deductions up to \$7,000, would the Minister consider introducing legislation designed to protect low income people instead of horse owners?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if the question was put to me, I must point out that there was some confusion around me. I will read it and give a more complete answer.

Mr. Allard: Mr. Speaker, I directed two inquiries to the hon. Minister of Finance, but he did not seem to listen to my remarks.

My question is this: in view of the fact that more than 50 individuals in Canada with revenues exceeding \$200,000 were taxed at a rate of 10 per cent or less, that the average taxpayer earning \$7,000 a year was taxed at a rate of 12.14 per cent rate, and that people owning race- or other horses will be exempted from tax over \$7,000, I ask the hon. Minister if he considered introducing legislation to protect low income people instead of horse owners?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, the question is so detailed that the hon. member deserves a detailed answer, which he will get.

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[English]

ABORTION

REQUEST MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT COLLECT
INFORMATION ON SUBJECT DURING VISIT TO EUROPE

Mr. Ralph Stewart (Cochrane): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. Would the minister advise if it is her intention to contact some of the well-informed persons in Europe on the abortion issue, as suggested by the Alliance For Life, when she visits that continent shortly?

[Translation]

Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, my impending trip to Paris has nothing to do with the problem raised by the hon. member. However, I have received a list of persons in countries having a wealth of data on abortion. I shall certainly contact them, when I am able to do so.