

*Oral Questions*

## ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

## PROSECUTIONS UNDER OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT

**Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova):** Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Justice as Attorney General for Canada. I should like to ask him about his apparent lack of consistency in singling out the Toronto *Sun* for prosecution under the Official Secrets Act—a very regressive step, in my opinion—and not taking a similar step with CTV, which essentially publicized the same data.

Is it because the Toronto *Sun*, like the hon. member for Leeds, is a critic of the government and only one of several independent news agencies or papers, while the CTV is the only national, independent television network? Would the minister indicate why he chose the Toronto *Sun* only?

**Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, if I may say so, the question is somewhat beneath the hon. member.

**An hon. Member:** No, it is not.

**Mr. Basford:** Without going into the details—which would be improper on my part—the cases are quite different.

**Mr. MacKay:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister not agree that the data used by the Toronto *Sun* and CTV was essentially the same? Would he also not agree that the situation is really disclosing an indictment of the government's failure in acting to protect Canada's national interests rather than anything that could possibly be interpreted as against Canada's interests? Would the minister not agree that this is a very, very questionable prosecution in view of the wide distribution of this so-called official material?

**Mr. Basford:** Mr. Speaker, I have not seen the CTV program to which the hon. member refers.

**An hon. Member:** How do you know it is different?

**Mr. Basford:** The reports from my officials and others are of a different nature. On the last part of the hon. member's question, obviously I am not going to start commenting on the case that is now before the courts, with regard to the Toronto *Sun*. I am not commenting on it either in this House or outside. There is a trial to be held and the prospect of a jury to be empanelled. I would ask hon. members to be restrained in the comments they make about it, so that the accused and the issues of law that are in question can be heard properly by a court. As I said on Friday, these are issues to be determined by a court.

[Mr. Lang.]

● (1502)

## INDIAN AFFAIRS

## NORTHERN PIPELINE—WITHDRAWAL OF B.C. GOVERNMENT FROM COMMITMENT ON LAND CLAIMS

**Mr. Jack Pearsall (Coast Chilcotin):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Last week, at a hearing of the special pipeline committee, a document prepared in the office of native claims was produced which made reference to a withdrawal on the part of the B.C. government from its commitment to the negotiation of Indian land claims, and which has since been published in the Vancouver papers. Would the minister inform the House whether there is substance to this report?

**Hon. James Hugh Faulkner (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. There is no substance to the report. There was some uncertainty, in November, as to what the province's intentions were in respect of the settlement of outstanding claims in British Columbia. I subsequently had a meeting in January with the minister, Mr. Allan Williams. Since that meeting, I think there is an understanding between the two governments and an earnest attempt to try to deal with the Nishga claims and, hopefully others.

There have been two or three meetings involving the three parties to the claims, the provincial government, the federal government and representatives of the Nishga people. There is no substance in that document, Mr. Speaker. Negotiations are proceeding well in British Columbia.

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## PUBLIC SERVICE

## REPORT ON EMPLOYMENT OF HANDICAPPED PERSONS

**Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Treasury Board. It is the third time that I have asked the President of the Treasury Board when he will be tabling in this House the report of the Public Service Commission from the secretariat of his department dealing with the problems of handicapped people entering into and performing within the Public Service of Canada. It is the third time I have asked him to table the report. When is he going to table the report?

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member, on the third occasion, will be lucky. I intend to table this report either tomorrow or on April 4. It will probably be tomorrow, but if not it will be April 4 because there is a recess in between.