

*Oral Questions*

**Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, on the first point in respect to Senator Cogger, I repeat that he has denied the allegations. It has been said in this House today that he has asked for an appropriate committee of the other place to investigate the allegations that have been made.

I refer the hon. member to an earlier argument along very similar lines which was made in this House on May 12, 1983. The then Prime Minister, Mr. Trudeau, said this, and I quote: "I do know that the Senate and House of Commons Act"—which it was then called—"speaks for itself. The qualifications of a senator are clearly defined".

As to the latter part of the question, will the government be taking any initiatives, I believe it is for the Senate to determine any question relating to the status of its own members.

On the last point, yes, I have checked in the department, and I answered the Hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party as to whether there was any representation made by any member of the House of Commons, said to the House at the time, and I repeat it, the member called the department and asked when the funding would be approved. I say to the hon. member that he has done that in various projects for his own riding. I have done it. If there is any member in this House who has not done it, he or she is not fulfilling the responsibility and duty which that member was were elected to do.

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

**Mr. Tobin:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly acknowledge the Speaker's advice and caution. The issue is not whether the member for Châteauguay, or the then member for LaSalle, or the Minister of Energy, or the member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte called a department in support of a community project. That is not the issue. I have no objection to the member for Châteauguay making 10 calls on behalf of a project for his constituents. What I have an objection to is if that call is made as a consequence of a request by another member of Parliament—

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

**Mr. Tobin:** —a Senator or MP—if that occurred and if that individual was paid for putting that influence on a member.

So that it is perfectly clear, I want to ask the Minister of Energy whether or not he is prepared to inform the House now, if he has the information. And if he does not, at the first opportunity, precisely when—because it is public information as the minister just said—the member for Châteauguay and the then member for LaSalle made representations to the Department of Energy? Was it one day, one hour, two days or two hours after they attended that meeting with Hydromega officials, which in the words of the member for Châteauguay, was arranged by Senator Cogger?

**Mr. Epp:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member confirms what I said, namely, that the member had every right and every responsibility to check on the status of projects in his riding, particularly this one relating to Hydromega.

With respect to the allegation that the hon. member just hurled across the floor again, namely, that the hon. member if and when he called the department, therefore by extension he naturally is acting relative to the allegations is something that is not sustainable and I suggest to the hon. member that the hon. member called as a member of Parliament. He should not make the allegation that he called only because of the statements related to the press.

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

**Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. It is on the same subject. There is a basic principle of law in Canada. It is that justice must not only be done but it must appear to be done.

In this particular case the perception is that Senator Cogger is being protected, that there is a double standard, one standard for the average Canadian and another standard for a friend of the Prime Minister.

I would like to ask the Solicitor General to carry out his responsibility and to direct the RCMP in an unequivocal fashion to conduct a full and complete investigation into all the allegations and, furthermore, to table that complete report in the House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Pierre Blais (Solicitor General of Canada and Minister of State (Agriculture)):** Mr. Speaker, if my hon. friend believes in the basic principles of justice, under such principles we are not here before a court of law, and