

and that information and that activity on that weekend, that is why the stop order came.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON TIME OF TESTING

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. I would like him to think back to his words in this Chamber when he said, in answer to a question from me on December 8:

The Member talks about Saturday. Dr. Todd received those samples from Prince Edward Island at 8.15 p.m. upon which testing began that evening—

On Sunday, after the testing through the night—

The Minister claimed that there was testing through the night yet we heard yesterday from officials in his own Department that absolutely no testing was done on the weekend.

Who is telling the truth—his scientist, Dr. Todd, or the Minister who is involved in this cover-up?

**Some Hon. Members:** Shame, shame!

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

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I am not involved in any cover-up, nor is Dr. Todd trying to give any information differently from any information that he has.

**Ms. Copps:** He is telling the truth.

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** What I said on December 8 and what the Member has quoted in *Hansard* is the information that I received. I think there was a handout yesterday at the press conference, in which, if she takes a look, if the Member takes a look under the Saturday, the investigation continues. I said, and I have tried to explain today again, that there are two types of investigations in this type of information. One is the lab testing. The other is the testing on the street as well as what I made available in terms of Prince Edward Island on the Saturday.

Mr. Speaker, I have been very open about that, I have been very clear about that. What the Hon. Member does not want to accept is that there are two streams of this testing that has to take place, that we have to get the evidence in order that we can make the medical link. Mr. Speaker, that happens in our labs, in our hospitals, every day of the week. That happens in medical laboratories every moment of my life. And that is a constant part of medicine and medical science.

Mr. Speaker, I have put all the facts forward. I would hope that she would at least understand that there is a medical science discipline that they have followed and which I, as a Minister, have to follow.

**Ms. Copps:** Please don't hide behind his officials, I would ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker.

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

*Oral Questions*

**Some Hon. Members:** Order, order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The Hon. Member knows that despite the seriousness of this matter the imputation of motive is not appropriate. It may well be that in argument at another time the Hon. Member may wish to draw some conclusions from the answers which the Minister gives. That is, of course, her privilege at another time. However, I would ask her to put her questions on the basis of the alleged facts which she has available.

I would remind all other Hon. Members that we have had a great many questions on this issue. The Chair has made very considerable effort to ensure that the Opposition not only has the right to ask these questions but is given every chance to exercise its duty. The Hon. Member for Hamilton East.

TESTING OF MICE IN OTTAWA—SCIENTIST'S STATEMENT

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday we learned from Dr. Todd that, contrary to the claims made by the Minister in this House on December 9, all of the mice which were injected with toxin in Ottawa died. In fact, the situation was so serious that this scientist said it was the first time in his living memory that in the testing of food toxins all the mice died. I would like to quote: "We had three samples and two mice were sampled and all of the mice died, six out of six". Why did the Minister tell this House on December 9 that only a small ratio of the mice in fact died?

• (1130)

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, again, I have given that information to the House and to the Hon. Member. I have given the number of mice that were tested. What the Hon. Member is referring to, and I have the Todd transcript here as well, was the one test, the one sample of testing. That is what the Hon. Member is referring to. I have not denied that.

What I have been saying throughout, just, as if she says that is valid, then it is surely as valid for me to say that as we are looking at the entire testing range, which my scientists are doing, that of the 336 mice we have tested, 93 have died.

**Ms. Copps:** Seventeen people are in the hospital.

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** The point I am making is that it was on the basis of the development of that medical evidence that action was taken. Surely, that is how medical evidence is gathered. That is how information comes through the line in the Department from the Assistant Deputy Minister of Health Protection Branch to the Deputy Minister, to the Minister.

**Ms. Copps:** You are passing the buck.

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** I am not passing any buck.

**Ms. Copps:** You certainly are. You are responsible.