

Oral Questions

made it clear, as indeed it is indicated by the prosecution in the Treu case, that the Government did not consider that the transmission of NATO secrets would not have been sufficient to lay a charge, if indeed there were evidence to substantiate that. The problem was that there was no such evidence.

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MISCELLANEOUS ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

RESIGNATION OF CHAIRMAN

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, all this last week we have been asking only economic questions and job-related questions. However, today I have a different question which I will direct to the President of the Privy Council, because it is a matter which affects the House of Commons. Last night the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier voted against the Liberal Government. Today the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates met. We were told that the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier had to resign as Chairman of the Committee. We were told that as soon as he resigned he was automatically taken off that Committee. In the spirit of parliamentary reform, will the President of the Privy Council allow that Committee to select the Chairman, who was nominated by the Hon. Member for Kootenay East-Revelstoke and by the Conservatives? Will he allow the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier to remain Chairman of the Committee, as both Opposition Parties insist?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, it seems to me that all the statements made by my hon. colleague are based on hearsay, since he keeps saying: we were told. I want to make it clear that it is not up to me to appoint committee chairmen or to intervene. Committee members are free to choose their own chairman. In the circumstances, the answer to the Hon. Member's question is yes. That is, I do not intend to intervene. It is up to the Member for Ottawa-Vanier and the members of the committee to do as they see fit.

[English]

Mr. Murphy: Madam Speaker, it is not hearsay. It was the Hon. Member for Gloucester who said that it was a matter of Liberal discipline. He said that in the Committee; it is on the record of that Committee.

EX-CHAIRMAN'S COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, will the Government allow the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier to stay on the Committee? We were told that as soon as he made his resignation statement—and we got that from the Hon. Member for Gloucester—that he was automatically off that Committee. Will the Minister allow that Member to remain on

the committee, and will the Minister allow the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier to remain as Chairman of that committee as both Opposition Parties insist?

● (1425)

[Translation]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, I would be more inclined to take this request seriously if it had been made by the Member for Ottawa-Vanier.

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[English]

INCOME TAX

RATE APPLICABLE TO UPPER INCOME GROUPS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. The previous Minister of Finance last November, 1981, suggested that the tax system was unfair and needed adjustment. He attempted to close some loopholes, but to compensate the wealthy, who took most advantage of the loopholes, he lowered their tax rate. The Prime Minister's present Minister of Finance has now reopened the loopholes but has maintained the present lower tax rate for upper income Canadians. Is this the Prime Minister's idea and his Party's idea of a just tax system and a just society?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member has asked me to comment on past and possibly future budgets. I want to tell him that I cannot do that in the context of Question Period. If he wants to discuss over all budgetary matters, there are times and places to do that.

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[Translation]

TRANSPORT

INQUIRY RESPECTING CHOICE OF AIR CANADA HEAD OFFICE

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. The Minister is no doubt aware that today, the Board of Directors of Air Canada will be asked to ratify the choice of Place Beaver Hall as the future headquarters of the corporation, even if this choice would cost about \$10 million more than another proposal. My question is as follows: Has the Minister, who is aware of this proposal, asked for an investigation, considering the fact that the same accommodation is probably available for \$10 million less? If so, who was asked to conduct this investigation, and since a decision is to be made today, has the Minister asked for the decision to be postponed?