

we deal with them directly, we reprimand them directly, and we require the removal from the country of people involved in those improper activities.

The Hon. Member should not abuse his position as an elected Member of this House of Commons to try to raise these kinds of allegations.

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TRANSPORTATION

VIA RAIL SERVICES—MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. The Minister has stated on several occasions that only 3 per cent of Canadians ride the train, but he has never gone on to say that only 4 per cent of Canadians ride the bus and that only 7 per cent travel by air, while 85 per cent of Canadians travel by automobile.

Why is the Minister so determined to run VIA off the rails rather than support the corporation as he should be doing?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the best way to help a corporation and a country is to ensure that both the corporation's and the country's finances are in good shape. That is exactly what we want to do with VIA Rail. I did not say that 6 per cent of Canadians travel by bus because I was talking about VIA Rail and about the ridership of VIA Rail. However, Mr. Speaker, I repeat that the funds allocated to VIA Rail in the last Budget reflect the frequency with which Canadians use this transport mode, and it is on the basis of this information that we intend to apply the present budgetary restrictions.

• (1440)

[English]

USE OF ORDERS IN COUNCIL

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, today the Minister has said that he will use Orders in Council to slaughter VIA Rail.

Why has the Minister decided that democracy in this country no longer matters? When will he stop using the math of the Minister of Finance and the truth of the Prime Minister to deal with this House?

Oral Questions

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, what I have said, and I repeat it, is that in the budget of April 27 there are many proposals or possibilities to deal with the VIA Rail budget.

One of those proposals could be abandonment of routes. If it happens, we could consider different options. Within the options is one is to go directly, by Section 64, to Order in Council. However, it will be done when we know if there are abandonments. Until that period of time I believe it is just speculation.

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CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

STATUS OF PRINCE CHARLES PROJECT

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister concerning Patricia Starr and the Prince Charles Housing Project in Toronto.

The Prime Minister knows the charitable status of this building depends on it being exclusively charitable in the judgment of Revenue Canada. This charitable status was only obtained with the intervention of the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Can the Prime Minister explain why charitable status has been continued when such needy persons as Mrs. Starr's son and a staff member of Premier David Peterson's office were both residents of this complex?

Why are Liberal and Conservative Party connections the main requirements for tax subsidized housing at Patty's Place?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, let me say first that the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, the Toronto section, has co-operated fully with Revenue Canada in its ongoing investigation. I think that should be made very clear off the top.

Revenue Canada is conducting an investigation into their operations. We are having co-operation from them. I think we should wait until that investigation is finished before the Hon. Member jumps to some of the totally unfounded conclusions he has jumped to.

PC CANADA FUND

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is also for the Prime Minister.