

Oral Questions

STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO PREMIER

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, since yesterday the Premier of New Brunswick has made further statements which further confuse this case. For example, he said, in relation to the secret meeting of October 7 with the Solicitor General:

I wanted to make the point to the new Solicitor General, 'get the investigation over with because, if it drags on like the former one did, it's going to result in encumbering me from doing my job'.

Does the Deputy Prime Minister not agree that this request by the Premier of New Brunswick to the Solicitor General constitutes tampering with the administration of justice in that he wanted to speed up the investigation? Does he not agree that that kind of request brings into disrepute equality before the law in our criminal justice system? There is new evidence and new damaging evidence every day, and it is time for an inquiry.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member believes that there is new evidence available, I urge him to make it available. It is my observation that the only injection of confusing factors in this matter is interventions such as his—

Mr. Axworthy: Stonewalling and covering up.

Mr. Nielsen:—and those of the Official Opposition and of the NDP. If there is any evidence the Hon. Member wishes to bring forward for consideration by the internal review now under way, I wish he would do just that.

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, if there were not the statements by the Premier of New Brunswick, and if there had not been a secret meeting, we would not be raising these questions.

REQUEST FOR RESIGNATION OF SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week one Minister resigned claiming he did no wrong. The Prime Minister said there was no breach of national or NATO security, yet he accepted the resignation. We have another Minister who clearly broke a long-standing practice in the United Kingdom and in Canada, by having a secret meeting with a person under investigation, and he has not resigned. Why the double standard, Mr. Speaker? Will the Government now request the resignation of the Solicitor General, and hold a full, public, independent inquiry into this case?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the last part of the question has already been answered.

Mr. Allmand: That is stonewalling.

Mr. Nielsen: It is not stonewalling at all.

Mr. Allmand: Darn right it is.

Mr. Nielsen: It is not stonewalling at all. Let me repeat what the Acting Prime Minister of the day, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, said in this House last Wednesday.

An Hon. Member: We know that.

Mr. Nielsen: He said:

—the former Minister offered his resignation because he believed that public allegations—

—which appeared in the noon edition of *The Citizen* of that day—

—impaired his ability to carry out his sensitive responsibilities in the extremely sensitive and important portfolio of Minister of National Defence, and because he believed those allegations impeded his freedom to pursue an action in the courts.

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Those were the reasons for the resignation.

Mr. Allmand: Double standard.

Mr. Nielsen: There is no double standard which appeals to my sense of reason and my logic, which seem to be entirely lacking on the part of the Hon. Member putting the question.

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NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS

DEPLOYMENT OF WEAPONS—ALLEGED REQUEST BY UNITED STATES

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg-Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Over the past several weeks we have directed several questions to the Minister concerning United States' plans for nuclear deployment in this country, and have always received assurances that Canada would exercise its independent decision and not receive such weapons.

We now have reports that the United States State Department has sent communiques to the Government insisting that Canada must accept nuclear weapons on our soil. This not only contradicts the Minister's own statements but is a clear case of nuclear colonialism. We would like to know what in fact is in that telegram and, more particularly, when did the Minister receive it? Finally, will the Minister today issue a statement totally rejecting the American request and saying that it is outrageous that they should suggest anything to an independent country?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as is usually the case in my responses to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry, I would say that his facts are completely wrong. There was no such request by the Government of the United States to the Government of Canada. There was, so far as I know, no suggestion by the Government of the United States to anyone that Canada should accept nuclear arms. There was, so far as I know, an instruction by the Department of State of the United States to their ambassador here in Ottawa to be in touch with us