

Oral Questions

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Minister of State (Immigration)): Mr. Speaker, in January a letter was sent to my office from an assistant in the Prime Minister's Office asking us to have a look at a certain file. It took us four months to take a look at it. I would venture to say that was handled about the same way as we would when the Leader of the NDP said to me: "I would appreciate your expediting the process of this case application and your providing me with a status report". As for the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap, does he want to forget the time he asked me for something this year?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mazankowski: Boy, oh, boy!

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member has the floor.

Mr. Forrestall: Tell us all about it.

Mr. Riis: I agree, I have indeed made interventions.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Riis: I have only asked that people be allowed to get into the line, not jump the line. That is what we are concerned about, jumping the line.

Mr. Mazankowski: Your Leader asked for it.

Miss MacDonald: Anyone is allowed into line, Nelson. That is stupid.

Mr. Speaker: I know Hon. Members would want to be of assistance to the Chair. There are difficult questions to be dealt with in Question Period. I would ask Hon. Members asking the questions to stay as far away from argument as possible, and I would ask other Hon. Members, in the interests of expediting questions and answers, to keep their comments to themselves unless they are recognized.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, obviously it is a very sensitive issue we are discussing in Question Period today.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Forrestall: For whom?

Mr. Riis: The Prime Minister is well aware that not only must justice be done, it must appear to be done.

● (1440)

In all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, if the case of Mr. Grossmann is straightforward and there was no impropriety whatsoever, would he then refer it to the appropriate standing committee for a complete investigation in order to clear the air once and for all?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Minister of State (Immigration)): Mr. Speaker, when the Member for Oshawa asked me to expedite a case that seemed like queue-jumping to me.

The letter which was referred to me by the Prime Minister's assistant simply asked that the case be given consideration, as all Members of Parliament would like it to be. I notice many of you are very quiet today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The Chair might observe that not all Members have been quiet today.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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APARTHEID

SOUTH AFRICA—COMMONWEALTH SANCTIONS

Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. The comments made by the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom during the recent meeting which he had with the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs seemed to have had a profound effect upon them. It appears that there is now a dramatic shift in the policy of the Prime Minister on South Africa as previously announced at the United Nations.

Is Canada now backing away from trying to get a comprehensive agreement on sanctions from all Commonwealth states? Is Canada instead going to follow Britain's lead and change its policy in midstream just before the convening of the Commonwealth Conference?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is no. I think the Hon. Member would find it very difficult to find any suggestion to that effect in the words of Mr. Howe.

The position of the Government is very clear on the question of sanctions. We believe they are effective economically and, more important, psychologically. We naturally believe that they would be more effective if they were more universal. We also believe in and are committed to having the Vancouver Conference of the Commonwealth continue to exert pressure on the Government of South Africa to bring an end to the system of apartheid.

We are trying to establish the most effective possible consensus among participants at that conference in order to increase pressure and bring an end to apartheid.

CANADIAN POLICY

Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of State is also reported to have