

Mr. Patterson: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the alleged unethical procedures used in seeking options on some of the properties involved and the effects upon the whole valley of the establishment of a project such as is contemplated, would the minister assure the residents that his officials will be present to discuss with them on a mutually satisfactory date the total program?

Mr. Richardson: Yes, Mr. Speaker. No purchase has been made and I would be pleased to make the arrangements to have officials meet with any citizens who are interested in this land transaction.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, on Monday we will be calling Bill C-32, the Petroleum Administration Act.

Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order simply to ask you, as Speaker, in preparing your comments and directions regarding the experimental question period, to give consideration to the deliberate practice of the Secretary of State for External Affairs when answering questions to speak as slowly as possible in order to consume time during the question period.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: I welcome the opportunity to indicate to the House that it will be my pleasure to give a statement to the House on Monday. It will not include any comments on the quality or word rate of any members of the House of Commons.

* * *

● (1200)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

TABLING OF REPORT OF CANADIAN FOOD ALLOCATION PROGRAMS

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I should like to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Food Allocation Programs for the fiscal year 1975-76.

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BROADCASTING, FILMS AND ASSISTANCE TO THE ARTS

Second report of Standing Committee on Broadcasting, Films and Assistance to the Arts—Mr. Douglas (Bruce-Grey).

[Editor's Note: For text of above report, see today's Votes

Order Paper Questions

and Proceedings]

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order which might come close to being a question of privilege. It concerns the tabling just a moment ago by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) of a report in respect of food allocations for 1975-76.

In view of the importance of this matter in terms of Canada's role last fall at the food conference, and the importance of continuing dialogue in this regard, I rise on a point of order in that the minister had tabled what I hope is an important document on the eve of his departure: he will be out of the country for I do not know how long, thus making it impossible for members to question or examine him on this document either in the House or in the committee. I hope it will not become the standard practice of ministers to table important documents and then disappear for a considerable time, thereby not allowing the House to deal with these matters of importance.

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. John M. Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: 1,532, 1,602, 1,883, 1,906.

Mr. Speaker, if starred question No. 1,789 could be made an order for return this return would be tabled immediately.

I would ask that question No. 637 be made an order for return, and also ask the consent of the House to tabling immediately the information which has already been submitted, and the balance of the information will follow as soon as it is submitted to me.

I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

[Text]

LETTERS FROM MEMBER FOR LEEDS TO SECRETARY OF STATE

Question No. 1,532—**Mr. Cossitt:**

1. Did the Secretary of State receive a letter dated December 3, 1974 from the Member for Leeds asking for certain information requested by the Brockville and District Branch of the Canadian Federation of University Women and, if so, has it been answered and on what date and, if not answered, on what date will it be answered?

2. Did the Secretary of State receive a follow up letter of January 30, 1975 on the same subject and, if so, has it been answered and on what date and, if not answered, for what reason?

3. Is it usual practice for the Secretary of State to allow over two months to elapse without acknowledging his mail and, if so, for what reason?

4. Will the Secretary of State take steps to have his mail from Members of Parliament and the public answered in less than two months?