

Oral Questions

French-speaking persons. However, *La Presse* of March 17 stated—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Would the hon. member please put his question?

Mr. Alexander: Mr. Speaker, apparently in the House, regarding the ganging up, the minister advised that this was a baseless rumour while outside he stated, according to *La Presse*, that the matter came from the hon. member for Papineau, which is a contradiction. Can the minister explain this obvious contradiction between statements inside the House which describe the rumours as baseless and statements outside the House which pinpoint the precise source of such rumours as the hon. member for Papineau?

Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the so-called statements outside the House.

Mr. Alexander: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister now advise this House whether in fact the question regarding the ganging up stemmed from the hon. member for Papineau or not? Can he assure the House of this or not?

Mr. Drury: Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure what the hon. gentleman is driving at.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): He is driving at the whole truth.

Mr. Drury: He is asking me, it seems, to reveal the substance of a conversation with a cabinet colleague. On a number of occasions I have stated—and I think I am right—that those conversations should not be disclosed, should not be published.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Drury: If he is asking me something else I do not quite understand what it is.

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SUPPLY AND SERVICES**LOCKHEED CONTRACT—ARRANGEMENTS FOR INTERIM FINANCING**

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Supply and Services regarding the LRPA contract. Could the minister indicate to the House whether interim financing has been arranged as of today and if so, in what amount? If not, can the minister give us some indication whether it will be achieved before April 1?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, this question is still under discussion.

[Mr. Alexander.]

[English]

LOCKHEED CONTRACT—POSSIBILITY OF PRICE INCREASE AFTER APRIL 1

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister, who is responsible for the writing of this contract, give some indication to the House of what the situation will be on April 1 should the contract not be signed? In other words, will the price of the LRPA program increase by about 15 per cent after April 1?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, I am afraid I cannot answer the hon. member's question, which is purely hypothetical. I think I cannot give more details to the hon. member at the moment.

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[English]

INDUSTRY**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON MEASURES TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY**

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Prime Minister? As the Prime Minister told me on October 30, in the House, that he would refer to the Privy Council and the Department of Finance for study my suggestion for paying productivity incentives in direct proportion to productivity gains, as incentives for greater productivity in industry, which would make our products competitive; and as, on February 4, nearly two months ago, the Prime Minister promised to make a statement soon, but has not made a statement in the House on the matter, may I ask if he has lost interest in this important matter, particularly as most economists agree that there can be no real recovery, and the AIB program will not succeed, unless industrial productivity increases substantially. Will he tell the House if he intends to make a statement, and when?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I agreed at the outset that the hon. member was asking an important question, one to which we made explicit references in the white paper published on October 14. Since then a few studies have been progressing and the committee I referred to, the interdepartmental committee, is looking at a whole series of proposed programs. One has to do with the nature of Canadian productivity problems, another is on opportunities for productivity improvement; another is for the preliminary identification of policies and programs to exploit those opportunities.

Other studies have been initiated in other areas. They include the Canadian historical record of productivity growth; the improvement of the measurement of productivity; the measurement of productivity in the public service; regional development programs and productivity performance.

Studies have been undertaken in other areas which are directly related to productivity, such as—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.