

*Oral Questions*

Mr. Al-Mashat, "do not admit him". Those were the Prime Minister's words in the House of Commons in commenting on version A of the Al-Mashat affair.

In version B, made public today by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, it is clear that nowhere was such a direct order given by Mr. Paul Tellier.

Why did the Prime Minister in the government's first version of the Al-Mashat affair suggest to the House of Commons and through the House to the people of Canada that a direct order was given by the senior bureaucrat in the land to stop Al-Mashat from coming into Canada when clearly no such direct order was given?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is using quotations of version A and version B.

This matter was brought before the appropriate standing committee so all of the information could be brought forward and all the facts ascertained. I am surprised that the hon. member now, after we have agreed to bring it before the committee so all the facts and relevant facts could be brought forward in an appropriate fashion, still insists on raising the matter on the floor of the House of Commons. I have no objection to that but surely it is a matter that should be properly questioned at the committee where all the witnesses they require and/or demand will be available to respond.

**Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte):** Mr. Speaker, the only surprise today is the massive contradiction between version A and version B and the total inability of the government to explain the contradictions between those two versions.

The Prime Minister claimed he was not informed until April 30 of the Al-Mashat affair. The former Secretary of State for External Affairs said he was not informed until May 7. Why then does version B released today say that on April 8 a briefing note was sent to "the legislative assistant and the deputy press officer at the Prime Minister's office, the legislative assistant at the Deputy Prime Minister's office, the legislative assistant at the office of the Leader of the Government in the Senate, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the legislative assistant for the Minister of International Trade", the legislative assistant to every bloody minister in the cabinet? How can they claim they

did not know? Even the chauffeur knew about the Al-Mashat affair.

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is so interested in obtaining the facts he may attend the committee this afternoon and stay and listen to the information that will be imparted at that time.

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. The fact is that the laundered version of events that was first presented—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**An hon. member:** Order.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member no doubt has a question which will assist the House, but I would ask that she put it in terms that do not make it difficult for the Speaker or unnecessarily difficult for the hon. member.

**Ms. Copps:** Mr. Speaker, it is also true that the first version wrongfully blamed the nephew of Jean Chrétien. The fact is—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Ms. Copps:** The fact is that today's version makes it quite clear that the responsibility for the whole affair lies directly in the office of the former minister for external affairs, the Right Hon. Joe Clark.

I believe, Mr. Speaker—

**An hon. member:** That's enough.

**An hon. member:** Order.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Speaker:** I would ask the hon. member to put a question and not put conclusions. We can argue about that later.

**Ms. Copps:** —that the hon. minister should take the advice that he gave on the RCMP affair in 1978 and accept ministerial responsibility and offer his resignation?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister Responsible for Constitutional Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I believe the rules of this House preclude me from answering questions relating to my former responsibilities. For that reason, I went today to a meeting of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade to make myself available to questioning by members of the House of Commons. For reasons that can only be related to the