

*Point of Order—Mr. Cossitt*

a member of the provincial legislature in his province. This concerns legal services, and particularly concerns work involving a radio station in that area. That is a simple thing and it could have been calculated very quickly and the question answered.

**An hon. Member:** Hanky-panky.

**Mr. Cossitt:** The parliamentary secretary promised that he would look into this particular question and give me a reply on when we could expect an answer. This was approximately two weeks ago.

Second is question No. 40 which has been on the order paper for almost three years. This deals with the fact that \$86,000 was spent on behalf of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) to buy things for his office on the third floor of the centre block. I asked what was bought and what did these items cost. For some reason or another the government is finding it hard to tell parliament what is contained in that list and what each item on that list cost. I can only assume there are some things on that list that the government would rather parliament did not know about.

Third is question No. 52 concerning Goldfarb and Associates. That question asked simply how much have these people received in the way of government contracts for various services performed in a certain period of time. In view of the fact that Martin Goldfarb controls when elections are held in this country, as we saw a few weeks ago, I would think it is more necessary that this question be answered at this time, and yet we have not had an answer to it.

Finally I come to question No. 1,088 which has been on the order paper for a long time. It concerns the misuse of the Unemployment Insurance Commission computer in Montreal by a firm known as Key Data Canada, used after hours whereby employees were brought back to work and used the machine or machines on an apparent non-permission basis. I have asked who authorized this and how much money was spent, who paid the wages of these employees, and particularly did the senior employee involved receive the gift of a swimming pool for his backyard for allowing this to happen. I do not know why this question has gone unanswered for months and months.

● (1222)

I do know that subsequent to my questioning the RCMP were called in to investigate. I have co-operated with the Mounted Police. I furnished them, as they asked me to, with the names of the employees who were called back to work and offered \$20 bills in plain envelopes in an attempt to involve them in the process in the first place, most of whom, I am glad to report, refused.

The point is, why are the results of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police investigation, which I understand is long completed, being withheld? These are the questions to which I want to draw attention. Surely it is not too much to ask the parliamentary secretary to rise now and say a little more than "I will look into it again". We answered two of your questions

[Mr. Cossitt.]

today," which they did, questions which were nothing of this significance, or the usual excuse that 86 per cent have been answered in this session and so on. Can we get something absolutely relevant and concrete from the parliamentary secretary?

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Pinard (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's number is a real verbal order paper. If each member of the House who does not have his questions answered as fast he would like took upon himself to rise and reread questions from the order paper to try and score a few political points for himself, we would never see the end of it and all it would amount to is a show of partisanship.

By reading over some of his questions remaining on the order paper, the hon. member has wasted some of the Social Credit's precious minutes on its allotted day. I do not intend to waste as much time as he did, so I will merely set right some facts that need to be straightened.

The hon. member implied that we do not answer questions and that is unfair, Mr. Speaker. I have here some relatively recent statistics dated May 9 which show that we answered 1,040 questions out of the 1,609 appearing on the order paper and that 559 questions were still outstanding on that date, but they are now being examined and have been referred to the various departments for research. That, Mr. Speaker, means that 64.6 per cent of the questions were answered.

I am in a position to tell the House that this percentage now has risen to well over two-thirds because we have answered many questions since last May 9. Furthermore, we answered 42 out of 44 orders for the production of papers, an almost perfect average. And Mr. Speaker, we also answered half of the questions indicated by an asterisk. That is another excellent average and it shows the good faith of the officials of the department of which I am the parliamentary secretary. Mr. Speaker, it is only fair to point out in reply to the question and insinuations of the hon. member for Leeds (Mr. Cossitt) that we answered 94 per cent of the order paper questions during the last session.

[English]

**Mr. Cossitt:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I will make this very brief. The parliamentary secretary, presumably speaking for the government, breached my privileges a few moments ago when he in effect said, and I do not have his exact words until I see them in *Hansard*, that I have no right to do what I was asking, that I was holding up the business of the House. I would say this. It is my right as a member—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Cossitt:** I have the right to ask questions, and I will.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.