

President of the Privy Council (Mr. Goodale). Looking at today's order paper I find there are at least 24 questions of a vintage more than a year old. Some of them were placed as early as November 3, 1975, on the order paper of another session.

● (1710)

I simply want to say that it is not acceptable to have 24 questions standing in the name of one person, which happens to be the hon. member for Leeds, (Mr. Cossitt) remaining unanswered. There is more than inability to answer at work here; there is vindictiveness at work, and I for one am not prepared to be a member of a free assembly which allows the government to show spite, malice, and deliberate indifference toward any of the members of this assembly.

I am not going to go through all of them because we should get back to the national unity debate, but question No. 31 in the name of the hon. member for Leeds is almost a classic illustration of the problem he is up against. Let me read just part of it:

With reference to the answer to question No. 3,573 of the first session of the 30th parliament, asking details on government business awarded to Urbanetics Limited which stated: "See answer to parliamentary question No. 3,359" of the first session of the 30th parliament, for what reason does the government consider this possible since question No. 3,359 of the first session of the 30th parliament has not been answered?

I think that is contempt of an almost unbelievable degree. I just want to tell the parliamentary secretary this, that some of those questions are going to be answered, and they are going to be answered starting tomorrow, or I will use the technique of moving the adjournment of the House on every possible occasion on behalf of the hon. member for Leeds until the government comes to its senses and revokes this revolting habit simply because it does not like the fact that a member has moved from one side of this political principality to the other and has changed from being a Liberal to being a Conservative.

In any event, I have made my indignation known and I am going to use every technique I can against the parliamentary secretary and the stonewalling of the government.

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend from Halifax-East Hants and I have had an opportunity to work rather closely with one another—at least, I had thought that was the case—in our work on one particular standing committee of this House, as well as in the House itself, and I am amazed and disappointed at what he has just said, particularly with regard to his imputing of motives to me and to the government in the process of answering questions which appear on the order paper. What he has just said is not only untrue, but I think unfair, and leaves a wrong impression with all members of the House and certainly with those who watch the proceedings of the House. I must take strong exception to the tone and the tenor of what he said, because it is simply untrue.

I have indicated on other occasions when dealing with a similar point of order that it is our objective to endeavour to answer all of the questions which appear on the order paper before the end of this session. I indicated to hon. members that

National Unity

in recent days some members had placed rather extensive lists of questions on the order paper which had the effect of delaying the process of answering questions simply because of the new bulk of questions appearing on the order paper.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, we do intend to respond to all of the questions before the end of this session. We will do our level best to do that, and I can inform the House that with respect to some of the questions to which the hon. gentleman referred in his remarks just now I think I will be in a position to provide answers within the next couple of days. But I can assure him that the suspicions that he has expressed with respect to motives are absolutely without foundation.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

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MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Ralph E. Goodale (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all the notices of motions for papers be allowed to stand for today.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

[English]

CONFEDERATION

DEBATE ON NATIONAL UNITY

The House resumed, from Tuesday, July 5, consideration of the motion of Mr. Trudeau:

That members of this House dedicate themselves anew to the continuing unity of Canada as a free and independent country organized on the basis of a federal form of government with two official languages and a diversity of cultures.

And on the amendment of Mr. Clark (p. 7321).

Mr. Leonard C. Jones (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, last night at 11 o'clock when we adjourned I had just quoted a paragraph from the document which had been tabled in this House some weeks ago called "A National Understanding". Perhaps that should be re-entitled "A National Misunderstanding". The paragraph I had read reads, in part, as follows:

In any event, the federal government asserts that it is incompatible with the unity of Canada that Canadian citizens should be able, when they move from province to province, to send their children to schools where they are taught in their own language.