

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

● (2200)

[Translation]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE—INQUIRY AS TO INFORMATION GIVEN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS ON CABINET MINISTERS

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, on September 11 last, I put to the right hon. Prime Minister a question of the greatest general importance if not the most extraordinary importance, to my mind, since it dealt with the integrity and honesty of the members of provincial governments throughout Canada. In fact, I asked the right hon. Prime Minister whether he could indicate to the House what policy he follows in advising his colleagues, the provincial premiers, when the government or he, through the Solicitor General or the RCMP, is advised of certain facts relating to the actions of members of a provincial government.

Of course, the intent of this general question was to allow the members of the House and, at the same time, all the people of Canada to be aware of the procedure when special information is available, when such information could reveal the existence of compromising situations for those who are entrusted with the management of a province.

In my opinion, the subject itself proves the importance of this question.

Mr. Speaker, I went on asking a very definite question, at that time, when I asked and I quote:

In October 1970, was the Prime Minister aware—

—of a certain joint investigation carried out in the province of Quebec by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Quebec Provincial Police about certain meetings of the former minister in the Bourassa cabinet, Pierre Laporte, with some people who are now involved in the organized crime world?

Why should we know these particulars? In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, in this particular case, it was extremely important for us to get this information. We remember sadly the events of October 1970 in Quebec. At that time, not only the government, but parliament, agreed, for example, to apply war measures, to pass a special emergency measures act and facts have proved since then that only a handful of people were involved. A few individuals had succeeded in scaring the government in creating fear and even panic not only in Quebec but throughout Canada.

If at the time when the government had to determine the fate of one person named Pierre Laporte it was aware of certain actions which could be called compromising, we can wonder if the decisions that it made could have been influenced by this situation.

I believe that we should know what the policy of the leader of the Canadian government is in such a situation. Is it his duty, as soon as he knows of compromising facts, to advise those concerned of the situation in order to

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protect the population of Canada since, whatever province you may be from, it is extremely important to be able to rely on the integrity to those who control the administration of the country?

This is why I asked my question, Mr. Speaker, and in my opinion it has some historical consequences since sooner or later some disclosures will be made to that effect and I am referring more especially to what I read in the press some fifteen days ago in connection with Paul Rose, accused of the murder of Pierre Laporte and from whom the RCMP is supposed to have removed some handwritten documents in which he had described the various stages of the unfortunate events of October 1970. We are wondering what the government had to conceal and that is why I think the Prime Minister—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time allotted to him has expired.

[English]

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member I would like to say that the RCMP does indeed co-operate very closely with all other police forces in Canada. The range and scope of this co-operation is very broad indeed, covering as it does all aspects of crime prevention and detection. This free and uninterrupted flow of information between policing agencies is integral to the over-all effectiveness of police operations. However, much of that information must, as I am sure the hon. member will agree, remain confidential.

I think that every member of the House can appreciate the fact that questions raised in this House relating to any police investigation are extremely delicate and often can play no positive role in assisting our police forces to carry out their very important and difficult functions. I would therefore conclude that as a general rule it would be improper for me to divulge the details of any given investigation conducted either by the RCMP alone or in co-operation with other policing agencies in Canada.

ENERGY—REPRESENTATIONS TO UNITED STATES RESPECTING PROPOSED MOVEMENT OF OIL BY SUPERTANKER TO CHERRY POINT AND ALTERNATIVE CANADIAN SUPPLY

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, on September 18, in questions to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) which he refused to answer by leaving them to be answered by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp), I asked the government to make a statement on motions setting out in detail the Canadian proposal with respect to the movement of oil to Cherry Point, keeping tankers out of the area, and to give the House an assurance that such a proposal will be immediately communicated to the United States government. I ended with the words:

—because nobody believes any longer that the government cares what happens on the west coast?

One can ask: Why do people believe that this government no longer cares what happens on the west coast? The answer is to be found in cabinet document No. 1214/71 which shows that as early as 1971 the Canadian government had decided to do nothing. This is abundantly clear