

Oral Questions

[English]

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

ALLEGATIONS OF INTERFERENCE BY JUDGE MACKAY—
REFERENCE TO PRESIDENT OF TREASURY BOARD

fore clouded with suspicion which will inevitably remain even if the Prime Minister in all his known modesty concludes that the people are innocent. I see him shake his head. I should like to ask if he would not at least make the terms of reference to the Chief Justice of the Superior Court public, what specific request the Minister of Justice made to the Chief Justice and, secondly, will he ensure that the public will have access to a written report from the Chief Justice when he looks into this situation?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will defer to the Minister of Justice whose officials I believe communicated with the Chief Justice of the Superior Court, but consistent with my earlier answer I am not trying to be a judge in this particular case. I am trying to ascertain for the satisfaction of the opposition and ourselves whether or not the courts feel aggrieved. I do not take the hon. member's word for that. I would like to know if the court feels aggrieved?

An hon. Member: One judge does.

Mr. Trudeau: I would suggest it would be in the interest of all in this House, including ourselves, that the estimation by the courts be made public. I think I would have to leave it to the Chief Justice himself to say whether what he says will be made public but I state that the government certainly would have no objection to it; but we are respectful of the separation of the Powers and I think the court should make the decision on that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY

DATE OF ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW TEXTILES POLICY TO
PROTECT EMPLOYMENT AND DOMESTIC MARKET

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Prime Minister.

Since the Quebec textile industry is now experiencing serious problems due in part to the increase in goods imported from various foreign countries and to the fact that the federal government textile policy of 1970 has not reached its goal on account of foreign competition, could the Prime Minister tell the House whether he intends to introduce a new policy to ensure greater protection for employment and the Canadian market, especially the Quebec market?

Mr. Marcel Roy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, this policy is now under review by the Textile and Clothing Board and a report will be tabled soon.

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. Apart altogether from the novel, precedent-shattering and dangerous principles just enunciated by the Prime Minister, may I indicate that there are at least two justices who feel aggrieved at the moment because apparently yesterday Judge Aronovich stated that, although he did not feel the President of the Treasury Board's call to him constituted an interference in the judiciary, nevertheless it was improper. For the benefit of the Minister of Justice may I quote the actual words.

Mr. Speaker: Order; if the hon. member has a question would he put it?

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Justice has to do with the words of Mr. Justice Aronovich yesterday, and I quote:

If any lawyer would call me up about a case that I have under judgment, I would, to say the least, be annoyed because a lawyer knows or should know that he does not—is not supposed to do that. Among other things you know that Chrétien is a lawyer.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, my question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN BY PRIME MINISTER TO CABINET
MEMBERS WITH REFERENCE TO APPROACHING JUDGES

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Would the Prime Minister advise the House what policy directive he, during his stewardship as Prime Minister, has given to the members of his Cabinet and senior civil servants regarding approaching judges about matters that are before the courts.

An hon. Member: Right on.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): None, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hees: None! Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. Does the Prime Minister then not see how easy it is, because he has never given them any instructions in this regard, to see why his officials have carried out actions which obviously should never be participated in by members of any government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I assume that every minister in my Cabinet feels it is his duty not to try to influence the course of justice.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!