

Oral Questions

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: I am not sure what the “Oh, ohs” are about, but I thought I would inform the House that during the leadership race period I have asked the Minister of Justice to be the administrative head of that office, the CUIO, but that he would be relieved of his duties for policy questions in order that they would not be applied unfairly to other leadership candidates, and that I would take questions on the subject. That is in answer to the “ohs” I heard from the other side.

Mr. Speyer: I respect the fact that the Prime Minister is taking questions with respect to this, but this question pertains to facts that occurred prior to the leadership candidacy commencing.

POSITION OF MINISTER OF JUSTICE

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Justice whether he had any conversations with the Minister of Labour with respect to this document, whether he in fact approved it, and whether he will do anything with respect to future documents which were approved during the currency of his administration?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, with respect to future documents, I think my previous answer would cover those. They will not be under the policy direction of the Minister of Justice. As far as the past ones are concerned, I will look into this particular document and perhaps inform the House with my answer.

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GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ADVERTISEMENT

Mr. Lee Clark (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. He will know that there was a three-quarter page advertisement placed recently in the *Thunder Bay Times-News* which featured the Minister himself in a pictorial manner. This advertisement just happened to appear prior to the coming to the area of one of his leadership opponents, and prior to local Liberals choosing delegates for the upcoming Liberal leadership convention. How can the Minister of Agriculture justify the use of taxpayers' money for what would appear to be blatant political purposes?

● (1430)

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member reads that paper very often, he would find that is a request we receive from it from time to time. Agriculture is an area the paper wants to develop. The picture

of Whelan being there probably could be coincidental, because I think I am in 14 papers today.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nowlan: How many funny papers?

Mr. Foster: Wait until tomorrow.

Mr. Clark (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, unlike Members on the other side of the House, we on this side, and Canadian taxpayers in general, do not appreciate the misuse of public money in order to assist any leadership candidate at this point in time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

TIMING OF ADVERTISEMENTS

Mr. Lee Clark (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the Minister of Agriculture. Perhaps he has already answered it. Does he in fact intend, as he travels about the country, that there should be such co-incident newspaper advertisements placed in appropriate newspapers at opportune times?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: John Munro could not get away with it.

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member knows that agriculture—he has heard questions about agriculture and I am sure he has listened to them already in the House today—is a very important industry and that there is a lot of concern about it. And even if I am in another contest, it does not mean that I should neglect agriculture. I am here today because the House of Commons is here. I meet the French Minister of Agriculture at four o'clock today to discuss world problems. There might even be a picture in the paper tomorrow. I shall also meet him at a press conference tomorrow. The Hon. Member himself can come and get involved in that if he wants.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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THE ADMINISTRATION

LIBERAL PARTY LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGN—ROLE OF CONTRACT EMPLOYEE

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, my question is a related one, directed to the Minister of Justice. In CTV's *Question Period* program on April 15 the Minister of Justice stated that his leadership campaign manager, Jim MacDonald, had ceased to be on the public payroll two weeks earlier as a contract employee in the Minister's office.