

Ms. Copps: What does his religion have to do with anything?

Some Hon. Members: Shush!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: We have been moving quickly, according to a very—

Ms. Copps: It is not a religion issue.

Some Hon. Members: Shush!

Mr. Hnatyshyn:—with respect to a review and an investigation of these files.

Ms. Copps: That is outrageous!

Some Hon. Members: Shush!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: We have had matters of agreements—

Ms. Copps: Absolutely outrageous!

Some Hon. Members: Shush!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: If the Hon. Member for Hamilton does not want to hear this—

Mr. Ouellet: Tell your guys to shut up.

Ms. Copps: Religion has nothing to do with this issue.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for York Centre.

DESCHÊNES COMMISSION REPORT

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, if Mr. Trudeau did in fact say that—

Ms. Copps: And religion has nothing to do with it.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ouellet: She has as much right to speak as you do.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member will put his question.

Mr. Kaplan: If Mr. Trudeau did in fact say that his Government gave the matter a lower priority, it remains a fact that there were more concrete results during the Trudeau Government than there have been from this Government which says it gives the matter a high priority. Results are promised, but where are they?

The Deschênes report recommends that there be prosecution in 20 cases that were identified as being cases for urgent action. When will there be some results?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, again, this is a misrepresentation of the Deschênes Commission report. He said that there are 20 cases that required extra attention because of their nature. He said that each of those cases required further

investigation, further action, and most of the cases involved investigation for evidence behind the Iron Curtain.

What we have done is to move with dispatch with the legislation. Second, we have made very good gains with respect to getting the safeguards that the Deschênes Commission recommended with respect to getting evidence behind the Iron Curtain. We are negotiating agreements to protect the rights of Canadians in this regard.

Third, we are fully involved in the investigation of these cases and we are carrying them on with dispatch and resolution, which is more than I can say about the previous administration.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: That concludes Question Period.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED IMPUTATION OF RELIGIOUS MOTIVE

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, a few moments ago the Minister of Justice (Mr. Hnatyshyn) suggested that a former Prime Minister's religion motivated his action with regard to the Nazi War criminal issue.

I want the Minister of Justice to stand and apologize. He suggested somehow that because the former Prime Minister was a Roman Catholic, he did not take the action that was necessary to bring that matter to justice.

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I made no innuendo or imputed any motives.

Mr. Nunziata: You did so.

• (1510)

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I was quoting the newspaper reports of what the former Prime Minister said himself.

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, the Minister, in the House, only a few moments ago, made an association between a person's religion, in this case the former Prime Minister's, and the decisions that resulted in the Deschênes Commission and the Government's action thereto.

It seems to me that the Minister of Justice should be the first person in this country to know that the recommendations of the Deschênes Commission have absolutely nothing to do with religion. The fact that a person is a practising Roman Catholic, Buddhist, Jew or anything else, is completely irrelevant to this issue. The fact that he would even suggest such a thing, I think deserves an apology because it shows that he does not even understand the issue with which we are dealing, that is, the result of the Deschênes Commission.