

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Certainly, it is against the rules of the House—this has long been established—for any member to accuse another member of lying. I did not hear the hon. member say that. I would have to rely on *Hansard*. I would hope we would not get into that kind of a situation. If the hon. member has, of course, made that accusation, he would have to withdraw it.

Mr. Peters: I did not say the minister was lying. I said I could be pushed—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Peters: I said I could be pushed into that. Mr. Speaker, I think *Hansard* will clearly indicate that I said "that is a lie," and there seems to be some difference of opinion as to the facts. I did not say that the minister was a liar but that the report he gave was a lie.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The distinction may be somewhat subtle. The hon. member has the right to question the accuracy of a report made to a minister. He cannot question the honesty of another member giving that report. I think it should be made clear that the hon. member states that he did not accuse the minister of lying or that the statement made by the minister is a lie. If the hon. member confirms my understanding of the situation, I do not think there is any necessity for withdrawal, but that should be made very clear. I hope this is what the hon. member will confirm to the Chair.

Mr. Peters: That is what my intention was, and I am sure *Hansard* will bear out that that in fact took place.

Mr. Speaker: There are three minutes before the end of the question period. The Chair recognizes the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

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URBAN AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR INCREASE IN FEDERAL SHARE OF COST OF RAIL LINE RELOCATION IN VIEW OF ENERGY CRISIS

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Due to the transportation crisis being caused by fuel shortages, will the minister now consider increasing the 50 per cent federal government cost-sharing formula for rail line relocation in Canadian cities in an effort to promote intercity rail transit in co-operation with the municipalities and provinces?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think that would be best answered when legislation is introduced.

[Mr. Allmand.]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LEAKAGE OF DOCUMENTS—POSSIBLE CHARGES AGAINST EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBLE—MAINTENANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I have asked before about the investigation into the improper disclosure of documents. I think the House would like to know if charges have yet been laid in this matter under the Public Service Employment Act for failure to honour the terms of the oath of secrecy which public servants are obliged to take under that act before being assigned to positions of confidence?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, no charges have yet been laid. The investigation is continuing.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I will recognize the hon. member but we have just about reached the point where I have to call orders of the day.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask whether the Secretary of State for External Affairs is satisfied that the course being followed in this matter will be a positive response to the recommendations of PAFSO, the professional organization bringing together the officers of this department who are anxious, as I am, for obvious reasons, and as all Canadians are, that everything be done to ensure that proper confidentiality is maintained in diplomatic communications and that the integrity of the foreign service is preserved?

Mr. Sharp: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I must say I was extremely gratified to see the resolution that was approved by the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers which supports the position that he and I have taken in the House, and most members, I hope.

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FOOD PRICES

STATEMENT BY CHAIRMAN OF REVIEW BOARD—POSITION OF GOVERNMENT

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I had a question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs but in his absence I will direct it to the Minister of Finance. In light of the statement made yesterday by the chairman of the Food Prices Review Board to the effect that Canadians would have to learn to live with high and rising food prices, I ask the Minister of Finance if this reflects the policy of the government and, if not, does the government intend to ask for her resignation?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to see that statement in full context and refer that question to my colleague to whom she reports.