

Oral Questions

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, advertising which is meant to convey information to the public of Canada about what is going on—

An hon. Member: The republic of Canada.

An hon. Member: Brainwash the republic.

Mr. Trudeau: A man over there is talking about his brain being washed, Madam Speaker. I don't know, there may not be all that much to wash.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: I do not think the people of Canada are as afraid of information as members opposite seem to be.

Mr. McGrath: Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister does not seem to understand that what he is doing is seriously undermining the role of Parliament to debate a government measure that is now before the House. What he is in fact doing is using the taxpayers' money to sell the Liberal party's position to this country. That is patently wrong and irresponsible.

The Prime Minister says a million here or a million there. We know that \$6 million has already been spent. I want to ask the Prime Minister this. How can they find \$6 million for a questionable advertising campaign when \$6 million has been denied to the Minister of National Health and Welfare which would provide an immunization program for children in this country under five years of age and would have 99 per cent effectiveness?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McGrath: How come on the one hand—and the Minister of National Health and Welfare need not have a questioning look on her face because it came from her own—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I believe the question has been asked.

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, I am sure all of us on all sides of this House could find ways of effectively spending \$6 million. That is the job of every government. We could cut the staffs and increase the price of lunches in the parliamentary restaurant, raise some more money and spend it on poor children.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

ENERGY CONSERVATION—INQUIRY AS TO PROPRIETY OF PROGRAM

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Madam Speaker, my question is diverted to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. It deals with his multimillion dollar advertising campaign which is laid out in a document leaked earlier this summer. The document describes his strategy for conditioning the Canadian public to believe that this Liberal government is doing a good job of managing the energy situation. It outlines

all kinds of dubious tactics, but does not even raise the question of the constitutional document questioning the legitimacy of spending taxpayers' money to permit what will be deemed by many to be a partisan representation. My question to the minister is this. Before he approved this program, did the question of the propriety of this program come to his mind? Did he consider it? What arguments did he present to justify this improper propaganda campaign using the taxpayers' money?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, the hon. member refers to a memo drafted by an official. I would be very happy to send him a press clipping at the time this memo became public. When the official was interviewed by the press, he indicated that his memo had been rejected by his minister. I suggest that before quoting memos as government policy or the policy of a minister, the hon. member should at least get proper information.

As far as the advertising put out by my department during the summer is concerned, I suggest that the hon. member take the trouble to read it. That advertising is quite clear. It puts before the public the importance of conserving energy so as to ensure that we are going to have the support of the people of Canada to act on their own in terms of supporting all our efforts toward conservation of energy and replacement of oil by other forms of energy, particularly through the excellent "Enersave" program which the federal government set up and which is working very well. If the hon. member will bother to check, he will see that what has been put forward has been institutional advertising aimed at informing the Canadian public about the importance of conserving energy and the importance of substituting other forms of energy in place of oil. I believe that such a policy has the support of all parties in this House and all governments in this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andre: Madam Speaker, the actions of this government belie the statement just made by the minister that this program has been cancelled, because there have been three ads so far, each of which contained the kind of Orwellian double-speak that this document deals with. This kind of propaganda campaign is outlined in a document by one of his officials, a document which talks not about perspective but which describes an \$11 million program in some detail and what kind of words officials use to create a condition rather than how to transfer facts to the public. If he is sincere in rejecting the philosophy behind this document of government propaganda, of Orwellian double-speak, will he here and now cancel that \$11 million advertising program, save the taxpayers some money and save his dignity a little bit? Because surely he must be embarrassed by this program.

Mr. Lalonde: I wish to thank the hon. member for his great concern about my dignity, Madam Speaker. I want to repeat to him that this memo and the \$11 million proposal was rejected by myself. What has been put in its stead is an