

Oral Questions

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, as you will well understand, the answer to the second question is the same as the first.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT—COMPENSATION FOR VANDALISM

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Solicitor General. It is with regard to the young offenders legislation. There is considerable public concern that, while the Act devolves total responsibility on the young people, because they are young, particularly in cases of vandalism, they cannot be held accountable. They have no way of making restitution. Would the department consider re-opening an examination of the Bill to allow for joint responsibility between the young people and parents, as opposed to vicarious responsibility? In that way those who suffer damages as a result of vandalism could get restitution.

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I know that the Hon. Member for Surrey-White Rock-North Delta has long had an interest in this very important matter. He put forward some amendments in committee with respect to vicarious responsibility by parents.

As the Hon. Member will know, because of the criminal context, the issue of co-responsibility and vicarious responsibility is a complicated subject. I can assure the Hon. Member, by virtue of the fact that he has an interest in this and is making a representation, that the Solicitor General and his officials will give serious consideration to that particular initiative. I appreciate very much the constructive suggestions coming forward from that Member.

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[Translation]

THE ADMINISTRATION

APPOINTMENT OF MR. BUD SHERMAN TO CRTC—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, my question is directed to the Government House Leader. The Prime Minister and his Government had promised to set up a parliamentary committee that would be responsible for reviewing major appointments made by the Government. As so many promises, this one has not been kept, so far. Many Canadians have objected to the appointment of Mr. Bud Sherman, a former Conservative candidate who was defeated in the last election. Mr. Sherman was appointed, as the House is aware, to the CRTC. It is also common knowledge that Mr. Sherman is well known for his comments on federal bilingualism—

[English]

On January 23, 1983, Mr. Sherman spoke in the Manitoba Legislature about "federal style bilingualism". At that time he said that "it has damaged the economy, has damaged the nation's social harmony, has damaged the Armed Forces, has damaged their jobs and their career advancement opportunities, very, very severely in many instances, to ensure the re-election of the Party at hand".

Will the Minister keep his word and his Government's commitment, and ask that Mr. Sherman appear before the Committee on Official Languages to justify his position and to make all Canadians aware of his stand so that we know what kind of people are being appointed?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I think the Prime Minister has addressed the matter with respect to Mr. Sherman. He has indicated that it is that kind of question which caused the representation of the Liberal Party in Quebec to drop like a stone in the last election, that kind of divisive approach to this whole important issue.

Mr. Sherman was not talking about the issue of bilingualism as a principle but the way in which the Liberal Government introduced it and attempted to implement it in the country. That was a disgrace.

As far as confirmation and other hearings are concerned, as the Hon. Member well knows, this matter is under consideration by the parliamentary task force on reform. We are waiting with great interest for the recommendations of that particular task force to come forward, to provide the guidelines and the method by which important appointments may in fact be made. The Hon. Member will know that this Government will act on those recommendations.

● (1150)

[Translation]

ESTABLISHMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier): Mr. Speaker, the Minister should ask the opinion of his colleagues from Quebec. It might be quite an education for him.

[English]

Will the Minister confirm that indeed his Government has not named the committee to review and assess the nominations of people to important positions basically because up to now the Government has named over 1,200 people and it wants to cater to all the Tory hacks in the country before giving Parliament the responsibility of evaluating nominations?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I suppose I must take the premise of the question seriously because it comes from a representative of a Party that is well briefed in terms of hacks and patronage over the course of the last years. All I can say is that the premise is wrong.

The fact of the matter is that the distinguished Member for St. John's East and his committee, consisting of Members