

issue before us today is an issue of crisis of confidence in the Government and in this institution? Does the Minister recognize further that his resignation would not besmirch his character or the Government but it would simply clarify the crisis of confidence and allow this Parliament to stop tearing itself to pieces and proceed with the business of the people?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, when someone has a pang of conscience usually it strikes you immediately when you see something happening not 23 months after the event as the Opposition is doing at the present time.

REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER SEEK RESIGNATION OF
FINANCE MINISTER

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Madam Speaker, my second question is for the Prime Minister. It is a problem of awareness. It has to do with the necessity of preserving the honour and integrity of this House as well as the necessity of preserving the confidence people have in democratic institutions. The reason for obtaining that resignation is a thousand year old tradition and it would allow this House to get on with the business of the people. Would the Prime Minister, in response to the need of this House to resolve this issue—because he has certainly gone a bridge too far—be prepared in the interests of the preservation of confidence and integrity of the House to ask the Minister for his resignation?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, as to the technical aspects of this debate, I hope it will indeed be resolved in one way or the other, and that is the purpose, I understand, of the non-confidence motion put by the Opposition.

As to the substance of the matter, as to whether there has been a scandal or not, or whether there has been some unbecoming or wrong character by any Minister of this Government, I think that is the issue.

● (1500)

I think in the conscience and mind of an impartial observer, if he or she will look at the circumstances surrounding this—the transparency of it—the fact that the whole project was put together in the first instance by a provincial Government, the fact that the funds were controlled by the provincial Government, and the fact that the guidelines foresee the reality that former Ministers will be able to deal with Governments of which they previously had been Members and prescribe the limits to that conduct—once again, this whole thing is so open—and the fact that it comes now some 22 or 23 months later, as the Minister of Finance has said, can only make me feel that the Official Opposition is looking for a diversion and that the NDP is looking for a diversion, one from their leadership contest, and the other from their dismal showing in the Gallup polls.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Point of Order—Mr. Collette

[Translation]

PETITIONS

TABLING OF REPORTS OF CLERK OF PETITIONS

Madam Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the Clerk of the House has laid upon the Table reports of the Clerk of Petitions stating that he has examined the petitions presented by Hon. Members on Wednesday, February 23, 1983, and finds that the petitions meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

* * *

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. President of the Privy Council to give us an idea of the business for tomorrow and next week.

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, yesterday, I asked the Opposition parties to let me know whether they wanted this Friday to be an Opposition day as well, so they could have a thorough debate on the matter now before the House. They did not, however, indicate any interest in this arrangement, so that tomorrow and next week, we shall resume debate on Bill C-143 which authorizes the Government to borrow certain sums of money.

If at any time we should complete debate on the amendment to Bill C-143 or on the second reading stage, we shall resume consideration of Bill C-139, an Act to amend the statute law relating to income tax (No. 2).

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[English]

POINT OF ORDER

MR. COLLETTE—USE OF QUESTION PERIOD TO ANTICIPATE
ORDER OF THE DAY

Mr. D. M. Collette (York East): Madam Speaker, I gave you notice of a point of order that I wished to raise at three o'clock.

In Question Period today, the line of questioning was similar to the Orders of the Day. I understand that this deviates from the normal practice that is accepted in the House, as outlined in Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, Citation 357, which quotes Beauchesne's Fourth Edition, Citation 171, which states:

The traditional restrictions on questions are those listed in Beauchesne's Fourth Edition at Citation 171, which is as follows . . .

A question oral or written must not:

(v) anticipate an Order of the Day—