

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice):** Generally yes, recognizing of course that the primary responsibility for prosecution under the Criminal Code lies with the provincial Attorneys General. A number of them have shown great interest in taking such prosecutions but none have made suggestions to me about amendments to the Criminal Code which might be appropriate in the circumstances.

**Mr. Towers:** A supplementary question. Could the minister tell the House whether the government intends to exercise its full powers in this field?

**Mr. Basford:** We have federal authority in this regard under the provisions of the Customs Act which are administered by the department of Customs and Excise and which I think have been fully exercised.

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**PORNOGRAPHY****SUGGESTED ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE TO STUDY MEASURES TO CONTROL**

**Mr. Dean Whiteway (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Acting Prime Minister. Can he tell the House whether the government intends to act on the specific recommendations that have been given to the Minister of National Revenue, namely, to restrict the ports of entry and to make changes to the Criminal Code? Could he also inform the House if the government would be disposed to set up a parliamentary task force to look into all aspects of pornography with particular reference to pornography directed at children and the increase in this aspect?

**Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Revenue):** Mr. Speaker, that idea which I heard when the motion under Standing Order 43 was moved earlier, does not at first sight seem to answer the problem of pornography in Canada. When members of this House on both sides have not been able to make up their minds to question the legal provisions and when the opposition House leader can state publicly that "pornography is both harmless and harmful," I do not understand where we are to go.

I think the question of abuse of children in the preparation of pornographic material is a serious problem. Most of such material is printed outside Canada, however, and we are back to the question of the use of customs mechanisms to control pornography.

I should like to draw the attention of my colleagues to the real problem of hate literature and magazines promoting violence which are also distributed to our population. I would like to be equipped with the proper legal tools to fulfil my responsibilities. If I can express a personal opinion I think it is time for this House to reassess a legal provision which goes back to the last century.

[Mr. Towers.]

**PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION**

[English]

**SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED**

**Mr. Speaker:** In accordance with Standing Order 40 and our modified practices for the month of June, may I inform the House of the questions to be raised at six o'clock p.m. upon the motion for adjournment which are as follows: The hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald)—Supply and Services; the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie)—Administration of Justice; the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche)—Commonwealth Games.

I cannot rule on the point of special procedures during this month of June without touching on the aspect of the order which relates to the hours of sitting on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The order reads as follows:

That, commencing May 31, 1977 and continuing to June 30, 1977, notwithstanding any Standing Order:

(1) Any Standing Order that establishes a forty minute limit on speeches shall be deemed to establish a thirty minute limit;

The areas of concern at the moment, however, are subparagraphs (2) and (3) which read as follows:

(2) Except on days allotted pursuant to Standing Order 58, on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, the House shall continue to sit until 10.30 p.m.;

(3) On Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, the House shall sit from 11 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. to consider Government Orders other than the business of supply, provided that proceedings pursuant to Standing Order 15(2) and (3) shall be taken up at the usual time;

The difference in the language between subparagraph (2) and subparagraph (3), upon careful consideration of the order, gives the impression that subparagraph (2) specifically excepts allotted days pursuant to Standing Order 58—that relates to the provision of sitting an extra half hour between 10 p.m. and 10.30 p.m.

Subparagraph (3) does not use that language and would invite the conclusion that even though tomorrow is an allotted day pursuant to Standing Order 58, the order on the face of it would provide for sitting between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to consider government business. I am open to discussion on whether that was the intention of the order and the discussions which led to the order, and I think for the benefit of hon. members the sooner we clear this up the better.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, this matter has been questioned by the various parties. I expect that we will have a meeting in early afternoon and I can possibly come back to the House with a solution.

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps the matter could stand for an announcement at five o'clock or six o'clock this afternoon.