

ment of part of Canada and one in which there is still time to stop it, I hope the negotiations are conclusive.

I hope that the conversations, which have been heralded in a book this thick with regard to press briefings, go far beyond that in terms of the legitimate concerns between our two countries because this is much more than a public relations junket. The Prime Minister is meeting a new President, a new administration, an administration which has exhibited some friendly feelings to the nations north of it and to the south. This is a great opportunity for us.

The whole project discussed in this motion is only the first. Therefore, the Prime Minister goes to Washington with the goodwill of this House. However, he also goes backed by some expectations of this House and the people of Canada. It is our hope that those expectations are not false and ill-founded.

**Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to speak at length on this motion to which has been indicated the unanimous consent of the House. I simply want to say that it was quite clear that in responding to an inquiry about whether this matter was going to be raised that neither the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) nor myself had any intention or thought of not doing it within this chamber.

As I have said many times, responses have repeatedly been made by us to questions. I wonder if the hon. member, who criticizes us for replying through a spokesman of a political party, would say that he is any less to be replied to than the hundreds of other people in western Canada to whom we have also made replies. There was no specific answer other than one which I, personally, have sent to many, many people including members opposite.

**Mr. Whiteway:** Why did you release it to the press?

**Mr. Jamieson:** If the hon. member will look at the media for the past three or four days, he will see there have been dozens of stories about various topics which are to be discussed during the meetings in Washington. I really do not believe there is much by way of substance in that particular complaint.

All I want to say at the moment is that I am delighted, as I am sure the Prime Minister will be, to have the unanimous support of the House on this issue. Clearly it is one we have been discussing in terms of planning for some time and it will have high priority. However, in fairness it is as well to note that work on this project and representations concerning it have come from members in all quarters of the House and there is general concern throughout Canada for it—

● (1120)

**An hon. Member:** With the exception of the government.

**Mr. Jamieson:** An hon. member says "With the exception of the government". I would remind him that the IJC has had a reference from the government on this matter for some time, that a group from the IJC has made a finding which it supports. I will conclude by expressing the hope that when we

### Oral Questions

go to Washington on Monday of next week the United States authorities will be receptive to what I assure hon. members will be the strong representations made.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Before carrying on with the debate I might indicate to hon. members that this sort of proceeding always places the Chair in a dilemma. A motion pursuant to Standing Order 43 of course requires the unanimous consent of the House only for its presentation for debate. Accordingly, when consent is given and the motion is put, it is before the House as a debatable motion, and that debate is now under way. Only on rare occasions does such a debate occur, but when it does it stands a risk—and it is no longer a risk but a reality—of running into conflict with Standing Order 15, particularly paragraph (2) of that order, which reads as follows:

Not more than two minutes after the reading of prayers, the business of the House shall commence. Members, other than Ministers of the Crown, may propose motions pursuant to Standing Order 43 at this time. Not later than 2.15 p.m. or 11.15 a.m., as the case may be—

And there we have the application directly to this morning's proceedings—

—oral questions shall be taken up.

And oral questions are to be concluded by 12 noon. Obviously, it is in our interest, when a few remarks are likely to be made by way of a very short debate, that I should exercise some leniency with respect to the beginning of the question period. As I say, the motion is a debatable one, but I am nevertheless under an obligation to proceed to questions in accordance with Standing Order 15. In the circumstances, I feel I should begin the question period now and listen to argument later as to whether we should resume the debate at the end of the question period.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### URBAN AFFAIRS

ALLEGED FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT TO KEEP COMMITMENT TO AID URBAN TRANSIT—GOVERNMENT ACTION

**Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the Minister of Finance. It arises out of a press conference yesterday at which the minister solemnly laid to rest the government's undertaking made during the 1974 election campaign to assist in the development of urban transportation. As a matter of fact, on June 5, 1974, the Prime Minister, referring to that promise, said that while other election promises were just election promises, Liberal promises would not be pie in the sky.

My question to the minister, who now runs the risk of being buried just as that promise was buried yesterday, is this. What