

*Inquiries of the Ministry***ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****IMMIGRATION****ALLEGED STATEMENT BY MINISTER RESPECTING
IGNORING OF DIRECTIVES BY OVERSEAS OFFICERS**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the statement of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration to the effect that overseas officers of his department have sometimes ignored the directives of the department outright by simply "not reading them or by dismissing them as propaganda"—I make no comment upon that—I should like to ask the Prime Minister what action the government is taking to ascertain the extent of the lack of control by the minister over the activities of his officers in carrying out the policies of the government?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of this particular complaint and I shall gladly discuss it with the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. However, it has been the policy of this government to ensure that civil servants everywhere do carry out the policy decisions of the government.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, this does not seem to be the case according to the statement of the minister. In view of the seriousness of the minister's charge if it is correct, and the seriousness of the damage to the morale of public officials if it is not correct, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether a full investigation is under way?

Mr. Lang: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, since what seems to be attributed to me would seem to suggest a rather serious maligning of some very hard-working and efficient people, I should like to draw to the attention of the Leader of the Opposition that what he seems to be referring to is some general conversation about why it is in a specific case someone may not have received a certain amount of information and it was related to speculating about specific cases, and nothing more than that. If anything in the report of what I said, which I have not yet seen, was anything more than that, I certainly—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Stanfield: I have a further supplementary question for the Prime Minister or the minister. I should like to ask whether it is the intention of the Prime Minister or the minister to leave matters where they stand with these grave doubts as to the extent to which the policies of the government are being carried out or, on the other hand, grave doubts with regard to the insubordination of officials. In view of the statement by the minister, is it the intention of the Prime Minister and the government to carry out an investigation to clarify this matter which cannot be left in this intolerable position?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Surely, Mr. Speaker, it is not all that intolerable. It happens every day, I am sure—

Mr. Hees: In all your departments.

[Mr. Speaker.]

Mr. Trudeau:—in any civil service the size of Canada's that some officials somewhere, some time do not always carry out their instructions in the best possible way. This may be through human frailty, through delinquency or some other explanation.

Mr. Hees: Lack of direction.

Mr. Trudeau: The government tries to ensure the greatest possible efficiency in the civil service. The minister has said and it is recognized on both sides of the House that we have one of the best civil services in the world.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hees: Which you are doing your best to dilute.

Mr. Trudeau: So to state that there are sometimes, somewhere, some inefficiencies, Mr. Speaker, is no reason for the government to do like the Leader of the Opposition and charge on its mount toward windmills that seem to be—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

• (2:30 p.m.)

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, may I ask one further question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Stanfield: I wonder which is the windmill that I am supposed to be charging? Is it the Prime Minister?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The right hon. member for Prince Albert.

Mr. Fairweather: How do you like that, Buster?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, in order to find out what Buster meant, may I ask the Minister of Manpower and Immigration whether he has found that immigration officers overseas ignore policy directives outright, either by not reading them or by dismissing them as propaganda? Is that a fact or is it not?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): No, Mr. Speaker, it is not.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Then why did the minister say it?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[Later:]

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, may I address a supplementary question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the very serious statement by the minister that he is unable to get his immigration officials or offices around the world to carry out policy directives, may I ask what steps he has taken to correct this very serious situation and whether, in fairness to the loyal civil servants in his department, he will make a statement in the House?

Mr. Lang: In fairness to those loyal civil servants, I wish the hon. member would not take a straightforward no,