

*Oral Questions*

have made a promise to this House that whenever the hon. member for St. Boniface professes to have some knowledge of heavy water I will repeat my invitation to him, or to any other member on that side, to come to my office where I will show him a transcript of the remarks of their House leader. I will show him a bill presented in the House of Commons on October 19, 1970—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond):** —and a transcript of the remarks of—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Some hon. Members:** Sit down.

**Mr. Speaker:** May we have order, please. The Chair recognizes the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

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**PENSIONS**

**REQUEST FOR ENLARGEMENT OF TERMS OF REFERENCE  
OF COMMISSIONER INQUIRING INTO PENSIONS OF  
RAILWAY EMPLOYEES**

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour who I believe is behind the curtain. Is the minister in a position to report any progress respecting the commitment he made to the House on August 30 and 31 that he would consider either enlarging the terms of reference given to Professor Deutsch or appointing another commissioner so that the adequacy and fairness of railway pension plans in their totality, especially Canadian National's, might be examined?

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I recall the remarks I made in the House on that date, though not precisely. I believe I indicated it would not be in the best interests of the railway workers to have Mr. Deutsch's terms of reference enlarged because it might delay his decision, which he would want to give to the arbitrator who indeed is himself under some haste to make a final determination. I did say that a supplemental study of the benefit structure of the pensions as opposed to the costing was under consideration, and I advise the hon. member it is still under consideration. Discussions will have to be held with the railways concerned, the Minister of Transport and the Union leadership, and we will get these discussions under way as soon as we can.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member rises on a supplementary.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Joseph-Philippe Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** If I understand aright, will the minister give consideration to the possibility of asking Mr. Deutsch to hold hearings in the various provinces of

Canada? Is that the understanding I got from that statement?

**Mr. Nielsen:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. These parliamentary secretaries across the way are paid \$4,000 a year—

**Some hon. Members:** Order!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I seek the co-operation of hon. members. We have just about reached the end of the question period. I will allow the hon. member to speak on his question of privilege; he should be allowed to indicate what his question of privilege is so the Chair may make a ruling.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege is one that has been raised in the past. A parliamentary secretary in this House asking a question is tantamount to one minister asking a question of another minister. These members are paid \$4,000 a year extra to answer questions, not to ask them and take up the time of the House with spurious questions to ministers. They can get answers to these questions merely by lifting the telephone or in caucus. It is doubly offensive for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport to ask a question on the very subject matter that comes under his minister's responsibility.

**Mr. Speaker:** I hope we do not get involved in a debate on this point which has been raised by hon. members on a number of occasions. I feel it is a serious point of order more than a question of privilege. The parliamentary secretary wishes to rise on this matter and I will recognize him for that purpose, and then attempt to call orders of the day.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to adhere to your request, but I must say that I honestly believe all members of parliament, notwithstanding the fact they are parliamentary secretaries, ministers or otherwise, have the right to represent their constituencies on an equal basis.

**An hon. Member:** Never mind the commercials.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** I feel we should not be forced to refrain from asking questions other than of our own ministers, giving the people in our own areas the impression that we have an inferiority complex as representatives in this House.

**An hon. Member:** Don't waste the time of the House, Joe.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, I feel I have every right and reason in the world to represent the people of Manitoba residing in my constituency.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**An hon. Member:** Take your seat, Joe.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** May we have order, please.