

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Paproski: May I address a supplementary question to the Minister of Finance. Will the minister assure the house that the government is not improperly retaining these funds to bolster its revenue position?

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Prime Minister and ask the right hon. gentleman whether he can confirm that his planned trip to the west will commence on July 12, or is he going to reconsider the date in view of the fact that it is Orangemen's day?

PROCEDURE AND ORGANIZATION**PARTICIPATION OF PRIME MINISTER IN DEBATE**

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Prime Minister. Would the Prime Minister inform the house whether he intends to be here next week to participate in the debate, or is he carrying forward his plans to visit the west?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think the west is more important than listening to a stupid filibuster.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Hees: A supplementary question.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There is a rule in our book—it is one of the standing orders—which provides that answers to questions should give information, and should not be such as to provoke debate. There is also a tradition in this house that the Prime Minister is the leader of the house and as the principal member must lead the house in the maintenance of respect for parliament.

Mr. Crouse: They have no respect for anything over there.

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): What a joke, this P.M.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I submit that the answer of the Prime Minister is contrary to the rule relating to answers to questions, and is uncalled for. The house is debating a very serious matter, namely the rules of this House of Commons, and I submit that if the Prime Minister has a modicum of respect for this place he will withdraw his remark.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Trudeau: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, I think any impartial observer of the question period in this house would say that about 80 per cent of the questions are not to elicit information, are not of a serious nature. I think my only qualification of the hon. member's point of order is that it is sheer hypocrisy.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has the floor.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister wishes to compound the situation by his further remark, then that is, of course, his privilege. However I draw to Your Honour's attention that the previous statement, the one to which I objected, did not refer to the question period but to what he called a filibuster, a debate that is taking place. The Prime Minister cannot escape his responsibility for the untoward remark that he made.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I see several hon. members seeking to rise, either on supplementary questions or supplementary points of order, but I doubt whether anything can be gained by continuing the point of order.

The initial point of order was raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, who suggested that referring to a debate as a filibuster—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): As a "stupid" filibuster.

Mr. Speaker: I would have to consult the precedents to determine whether that word is unparliamentary. It seems to me that in my short years in parliament I have often heard a debate called a filibuster by members on either one side of the house or the other. No suggestion was made at those times that that term was unparliamentary, and I would not think that it is. Whether an adjective describing that word makes it less or more unparliamentary—