

Oral Questions

debate, and if his colleague wishes to meet this afternoon, I am available, provided the House Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party is willing to attend the meeting as well and make his views known.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

U.S.S.R.—SHOOTING DOWN OF KOREAN AIRLINER—PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister who, I understand, will not be in the House until next week, I put my question to the Acting Prime Minister.

An Hon. Member: Where is Mulroney?

An Hon. Member: We want Joe.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Stevens: Madam Speaker, as Members of the Government know, the Leader of the Opposition is attending the funeral of one who has served Canada well for many years—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. That is not part of Question Period. The Hon. Member owes no answer to the House in these things.

Mr. Stevens: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. In the context of a statement made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the House on September 12, who quoted our ambassador to the United Nations as saying, when referring to the KAL 007 tragedy, as reported at page 27025 of *Hansard* as follows:

The deliberate in-flight destruction of this civilian, unarmed, easily identifiable passenger aircraft by sophisticated fighter aircraft of the Soviet Union, no matter where it occurred, is nothing short of murder.

● (1450)

Would the Acting Prime Minister indicate if in fact the Prime Minister was stating the present position of the Government, when he said in Sault Ste. Marie on Sunday that the same shooting—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order, please. Really, this is an abuse of quotations, the second one in the same question. There must be a simple question which can be asked, and the House need not be reminded of all of these quotations.

Mr. Nielsen: A simple answer.

Mr. Stevens: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Was the Prime Minister expressing the present position of the Government when he stated that the downing of the KAL 007 flight was an accident, as he stated last Sunday?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I am not aware of these state-

ments. I will report them to the Prime Minister. I am sure he will be able to handle the question when he returns from his trip to New York where he is attending a meeting of the UN. Of course, I would like to report to the Hon. Member that the Leader of the Opposition is having a very good week this week in the House; he did not open his mouth at all. I have nothing else to add.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stevens: Madam Speaker, the Acting Prime Minister at least concluded his remarks with something we all agree with; he has nothing to say.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, if the Acting Prime Minister does not want to comment on the unfortunate comment made by his Prime Minister, would he tell the House what in fact is the Government's position with respect to the shooting down of the Korean aircraft? Was it an accident, or was it a deliberate act of murder?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, the position of this Government is very well known on this issue. Canada was the first country to move on this issue. It was the first country to apply sanctions against the Russians. I believe the policy of this Government on this incident is very well known in the Canadian and the international community.

Mr. Stevens: What is it?

Mr. Chrétien: We took many initiatives. I am sure that the statements made by the Prime Minister here in the House or anywhere else can be read by everyone, but the facts remain the same. This Government was the first to condemn the action of the Russians and to take action to ensure there would be adequate compensation for the lives of the Canadians who died. I have not read the two statements referred to by the Hon. Member. I will read them and will be in a position to comment after I have done so. I have not seen them yet.

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[Translation]

PUBLIC WORKS

MIRABEL AIRPORT—EXPROPRIATION OF LAND

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works. Some time ago, I sent a press clipping from a Montreal daily which indicated that in 1970, the Government had asked its experts to make a study of land expropriation in connection with Mirabel Airport. The document clearly condemns and acknowledges the monumental error made by the Government in expropriating so much land, and I would like to know