

use the word deliberately. I asked the President of Treasury Board on Monday the following:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Treasury Board regarding job classification. It has come to my attention that there has been a waste of millions of dollars a year as a result of overclassification of jobs in the public service. I am sure the minister is aware of this serious matter and I wonder if he can advise whether a study has been undertaken. If so, would he table the report?

The President of the Treasury Board replied:

Mr. Speaker, I do not accept the premise of the hon. member's question. I am not aware of the situation as he describes it. I will certainly look into it with great interest. I do not believe the hon. member has made a correct statement of the situation.

Those are the governing words.

Subsequently, the following day his own officials indicated that some time in 1976 there was a survey, assessment or audit taken involving some 2,000 public servants in the Ottawa-Hull district, the result of which indicated that some 16 per cent of those public servants audited were overclassified and at that time it meant a loss or waste of money amounting to some \$19 million per year. This same situation exists even today. That was phase one of the study.

Phase two is another study that the President of the Treasury Board and/or his department have undertaken which involves overclassification outside the Ottawa-Hull area. If the projection of 16 per cent of 2,000 is carried on it means there is some \$75 million being overpaid in terms of overclassification. What is disturbing is that the President of the Treasury Board—Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely important matter and I hope you will have patience. I wanted to get it on yesterday but because of the importance of the situation yesterday afternoon I did not take the time of the House. I have been patient today, and I hope you will be patient with me.

I want to say as well that I am sure that the minister has also been advised that his own department has completed a more recent study on the accuracy of classifications in the personnel administration group. I point out that these are the very people who are responsible for administering the classification systems throughout the entire public service. The minister's own study in this regard, as I understand it, indicates that 22 per cent in this group are misclassified.

My point is this. When I indicated to the President of the Treasury Board there were millions of dollars being wasted because of overclassification, he did not accept that premise at all; and now I would like the President of the Treasury Board to stand up and come clean with the Canadian people and indicate that I am right, that there is—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member on his own terms is asking, as a result of his point of order, the hon. President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Andras) not to correct any matter in which he may have one way or the other misled the House on Monday, but rather to come to an agreement and say that the hon. member himself is right. This, in essence, is a disagreement and does not in any sense constitute a point of order.

Point of Order—Mr. MacEachen

● (1522)

Mr. Alexander: Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Mr. Alexander: A question of privilege, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Trudeau: Oh, sit down.

Mr. Alexander: Don't tell me to sit down.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Mr. Alexander: Let the Speaker tell me to sit down.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Mr. Alexander: You have destroyed this country enough; don't try to destroy parliament.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

MR. MACEACHEN—EXTENSIONS OF ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I should like to draw to the attention of the House Standing Order 15(2), 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, oral questions shall be taken up. At 3:00 p.m., or 12:00 noon, as the case may be, the House shall proceed to the ordinary daily routine of business, which shall be as follows:

Of course, it begins with presenting reports from standing and special committees.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) rose and began to ask questions at a few minutes before three o'clock and the question period was extended until about 10 minutes after three. We extended that courtesy—

An hon. Member: The Speaker did, not you.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: We extended that courtesy to the Leader of the Opposition, as we have done on previous occasions when he rose at a minute or two before three o'clock. I want to make it very clear that we reserve the right in the future to rise at three o'clock and ask that, in accordance with the rules, we proceed with the ordinary daily routine of business. We do not admit at all that there is any discretion in any member of the House to alter the standing orders, which are clear.

Mr. Paproski: Shame on you!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The President of Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) raises, not I presume by way of a