

Oral Questions

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): I have no correspondence or documents in this case. I received merely a document with the procedure and the criteria on it, which I thought would have been sent directly to the minister, but it was sent to my office to be given to him. However, the file is in the hands of the National Parole Board. That is an independent quasi-judicial body. The hon. member would have to ask the board for any correspondence or material. I have no right to interfere.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Prime Minister a question. Would the Prime Minister advise the House what circumstances led to his unprecedented visit to the Supreme Court of Canada, and what was the purpose of it?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blais: How about church?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure that if the Prime Minister is left to answer that question by himself, he will be quite able to do so.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I was invited.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to ask a question of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. However, I see that the case of the disappearing minister is with us again, and I will reserve my question until he is back.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF CONFLICTING STATEMENTS ON NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH INDIA—ROLE OF MR. HEAD

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the Secretary of State for External Affairs stated in the House on Tuesday that Canada, in its negotiations with India, had never varied from the position that all nuclear facilities originating in Canada must be safeguarded but that last night the Indian foreign minister stated that his government understood that the safeguard in question had been settled and that India had a binding agreement with Canada, will the Prime Minister indicate whether Mr. Head, when he was in New Delhi last March, exceeded his authority when negotiating that agreement with India?

Miss Monique Bégin (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the document which was initialled by our officials in India was an ad referendum agreement and is not binding on any

[Mr. Paproski.]

government. That is a well known technique following discussions. Canada has done everything possible to upgrade the safeguards in India, and in trying to conclude an agreement Canada was not able to reach the levels she wanted.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH INDIA—POSSIBILITY CABINET REVERSED EARLIER DECISION

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is for the Prime Minister or for a responsible minister.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Ask somebody else, then.

Mr. Lawrence: If in initialling the agreement Mr. Head was within the instructions given to him by the government, is it not a valid conclusion that the cabinet reversed itself on this matter?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I apologize for standing in front of a lady.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: He said a responsible minister.

Miss Monique Bégin (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I probably expressed myself badly earlier. I said that the officials of the government had initialled, and not signed, an ad referendum agreement. That is not an agreement. It is a document called "ad referendum agreement", and so there was no reversal of any cabinet decision whatsoever. The cabinet decision followed a study of that particular document.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

REFUSAL OF STORES TO CASH BONUS COUPONS—POSSIBLE FALSE ADVERTISING—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Arnold Malone (Battle River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Is the minister aware that many people, often senior citizens, find it impossible to cash in on bonus coupons which are enclosed in many food products, and does the minister consider this a form of false advertising?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the hon. gentleman for giving me notice of the question. Several acts, both provincial and federal, cover the whole area of misleading advertising. I think at best this could be described as immoral if not illegal. Obviously, there is no obligation on the retailer to accept the provisions of a coupon in a package. I think the specific law which is most appropriate is in Quebec where a coupon can be exchanged for equivalent cash, and we are presently looking at our own legislation to see if this would be a helpful amendment.