

Order Paper Questions

should follow. I recognize that if questions do follow and a member of the government party wishes to participate in the questioning, that member ought to be entitled to do so. I have recognized that in the past. However, I do not think it would be a proper exercise of the discretion of the Chair to allow only questions from the government side, in the spirit of the adjustments made to the procedures.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I rise on this point of order. I understand that members of the opposition are reluctant to address questions today because it is an allotted day. I should point out that my decision to make my statement today was to meet the request of the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche), who will not be in the House tomorrow or the next day. I was quite prepared to make my statement tomorrow so that hon. members would have a wide opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.

I find it regrettable that a question of this magnitude has not been dealt with in the normal way. It may be useful to consider whether we should have a short question period on this subject tomorrow under motions, so that members on all sides might follow up the matter more fully.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the government House leader very much. I think that is a most commendable suggestion.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, perhaps it can be understood as agreed.

Mr. Speaker: That is a suggestion that I am sure will be explored in the next 24 hours and probably exposed to greater clarity during that time.

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● (1550)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Ralph E. Goodale (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 1,465, 2,264 and 2,306.

[Text]

COST OF TRANSLATING TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS

Question No. 1,465—**Mr. McKenzie:**

1. What was the cost of translating technical documents in (a) the Department of Transport (b) the Department of National Defence (c) Air Canada for (i) 1975 (ii) 1976?

2. Is the translation of technical documents in (a) the Department of Transport (b) the Department of National Defence (c) Air Canada contracted out and, if so, what are the names and addresses of the firms presently holding such contracts?

3. What was the total amount of each such contract and for how long are the contracts?

4. What was the translation cost per word in each contract?

[Mr. Speaker.]

Mr. Ralph E. Goodale (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): In so far as the Department of the Secretary of State is concerned: It is difficult, in some cases, to distinguish between technical texts, scientific texts and other. To avoid any confusion, we shall consider as translation all the official languages translation done for a department. 1. Bureau operations are accounted for according to fiscal year. The answers given will therefore be for the years 1974-75 and 1975-76. The Translation Bureau does not operate on a cost recovery basis. Therefore, for the translations done right in the Bureau, it is impossible to place a real cost on the services provided to a specific department. However, it is possible, using Bureau statistics, to calculate the average cost of translation per work and the number of words translated per department. (a) The estimated cost of official languages translation done for the Department of Transport is the following: (i) 1974-75: \$520,000. (ii) 1975-76: \$1,056,000. (b) The estimated cost of official languages translation done for National Defence is the following: (i) 1974-75: \$2,465,000. (ii) 1975-76: \$2,745,000. (c) Air Canada did not call upon the Bureau's services.

2. The translation bureau contracted out certain translations for the departments in question. However, it is not customary to provide lists of approved contract translators or lists of contract translators who have provided services to a specific department, since such information might give the person receiving it an advantage over another present or potential contractor. In 1975, 42 different contract translator did official languages translations under contract for the Department of Transport, and 63 provided a similar service for National Defence. In 1976, the translation bureau awarded contracts to 31 contract translators for the Department of Transport, and to 49 for National Defence. No contracts were negotiated for Air Canada.

3. The length of the contracts varied from one day to 21 months, while the costs varied between \$4.80 and \$13,545.60, although most of the contracts were carried out in less than two months and for sums amounting to less than \$1,000.

4. Depending on the relative difficulty of each of the texts contracted out for translation, the prices ranged between 5.5 cents (\$0.055) and 8.0 cents (\$0.080) a word.

The Management of Air Canada advises as follows: 1. (a) and (b) Not applicable. (c) No technical documents were translated in 1975 and 1976.

2. (a) and (b) Not applicable. (c) Yes. Beginning in 1977. Sud Est Traduction, Hyères, France and Technitrans, Montreal, Quebec.

3 and 4. It is Air Canada's policy to seek the best value available through competitive tenders and the airlines considers resultant prices, awards and terms confidential.