

*Oral Questions***LAND CLAIMS**

**Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

The aboriginal peoples in Canada have had their native communications program squashed, their organizational core funding threatened, their land use planning programs scrapped and their social assistance for off reserve Indians threatened, all due of course to economic restraint and this government's budgetary butcher block.

How then does this government have the audacity to justify and extend the very juicy \$152,000 contract with Bernard Roy, a negotiator for the Oka land deal?

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member, I would like to point out that the budget of this government introduced a few weeks ago showed a \$200 million increase to the program support for aboriginal people, an increase of over 8 per cent at a time when all government department's are being held to a 3 per cent increase.

Second, that is not to mention the several hundred million dollars of additional new initiatives committed in the native agenda which the Prime Minister unveiled in this House last September 25. Many of those initiatives have already been announced and further are to be announced in the coming days.

Third, there have been dozens and dozens of agreements on land claims and new capital infrastructure in the native communities across Canada that I and my colleague, the minister of state, have signed in recent months. The premise on which the member's question is based is faulty.

In regard to Mr. Roy, the billings to the end of the past fiscal year were \$33,000. He concluded the signing of a framework agreement with the Kanesatake community in February and continues very important work to secure a lasting settlement of the land issues at Kanesatake.

**Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic):** Mr. Speaker, it does not matter how this government throws money at the aboriginal problem, until this Prime Minister meets with the leadership of the aboriginal community. The Prime Minister has met once with Georges Erasmus in six and a half years.

*The Ottawa Citizen* quotes Mr. Roy's lucrative contract as including \$4,000 for hospitality and \$15,000 for travel. It is only half an hour from Oka to Montreal, and the average income for an aboriginal female is between \$12,000 and \$15,000 a year. With administrative costs of \$9,000, how can the government allow Mr. Roy to profit so extravagantly over only an eight-month period and this problem has yet to be resolved?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that my friend said in her original question that we were not doing enough financially to assist the aboriginal people, and when the minister responded with indications of what we are doing, my hon. friend said money was not what she was talking about. Now the implication is that there is something improper with Mr. Bernard Roy—

**Ms. Blondin:** Well, no. He is your friend.

**Mr. Mulroney:** Well indeed—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps members would want the Right Hon. Prime Minister to be able to complete his answer.

**Mr. Mulroney:** Mr. Speaker, now I understand why my hon. friend raised the question; not because Mr. Roy is unqualified—because he is one of the most distinguished members of the bar of the province of Quebec and one of the leading barristers—but because he is my friend.

Well, fine, that is true. So is the Leader of the Opposition. We have had friendly oppositions, and he has had a lot to do in representing aboriginal people. I have never once questioned the large fees received by the Leader of the Opposition, because I am sure he was worth every nickel of it

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

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**REVENUE CANADA**

**Mr. Garth Turner (Halton—Peel):** Mr. Speaker, we are now in the fourth month since the GST came into effect. The government made a pledge that the new tax system would be fairer, especially to small business people, through the removal of the old federal sales tax. However, some of these business people are wondering what went wrong.