

Oral Questions

[Translation]

QUERY WHEN PRIME MINISTER WILL DEMAND MINISTER'S RESIGNATION

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is also directed to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister just heard the reply of his Minister of Public Works. He knows also that the same minister said, as recorded on page 11808 of the official report of the *Debates*, December 15, 1987, that the taxpayers "got value for the money".

Considering what we know today, Mr. Speaker, that \$100 million have been wasted, \$100 million have been lost, that a Conservative made \$252 000 in 24 hours, is it not time to take that Minister and send him back to the back benches? When will the Prime Minister demand the resignation of the Minister of Public Works?

[English]

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, since 1984 we have been involved in a salvage operation. We have put in place a procedure to allow those people who had their lands expropriated unfairly to purchase their lands back on a fair and equitable basis. The procedures put in place were very much the same as those put in place by the previous Government, although we improved the justice, morality, and economics of the situation.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, it has been an enriching experience for some, that is quite true.

● (1420)

LAND SALE PROGRAM—REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF ROYAL COMMISSION

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Prime Minister. The former Minister of Public Works, the Member for Joliette, said in an interview that the Prime Minister personally authorized him to overrule Treasury Board and Public Works staff to expedite phase 2 of the land sale program at Mirabel. Why did the Prime Minister overrule experts for political considerations? Will he now do the right thing and call a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the management, into the disposition of properties and the operations of the Canada Lands Company at Mirabel? If he does not want to do that, I will have to ask him what he has to hide.

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I ask the Member to produce proof that any member of that community received the kind of treatment that is not available to any other member of the community. Every transaction has received Treasury Board approval and every transaction over \$70,000 has been audited and approved by the Comptroller General of Canada.

[Translation]

QUERY WHEN PRIME MINISTER TOOK COGNIZANCE OF RESULTS OF ELECTION COMMISSIONER'S INQUIRY INTO MATTER CONCERNING MEMBER FOR FRONTENAC

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, I should like, first of all, to point out to the Prime Minister that last week, his Deputy Prime Minister has stonewalled and systematically refused to shed some light on the circumstances concerning the reinstatement in Cabinet of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Now that the Prime Minister is back in the House, he could perhaps tell us when he got acquainted with the conclusions of the investigation made by the Commissioner of Elections. When did he see the letter received by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources? And when did the latter discuss with him the contents of the letter, at which time they both concluded that he would be reinstated?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member asks when I learned about the decision. I was advised by the secretary of the Cabinet on November 28, following the publication of a statement issued by the Commissioner of Canada Elections, Mr. Joseph Gorman, on November 28 as follows:

"I have reviewed the results of the investigation which I received at 1300 hours on Thursday, November 21, 1985 as well as the recommendations of independent counsel which I received at 2030 hours on November 26, 1985 and I have decided that no charges will be laid against the Honourable Marcel Masse or his official agent, Jean Morissette."

The official responsible to Parliament issued a decision which was conveyed to me and we acted accordingly.

QUERY WHETHER PRIME MINISTER HAS SEEN CERTAIN PORTION OF FILE

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the Prime Minister has only taken a glance at those documents. If he had read them thoroughly, he would have seen that the Election Commissioner was saying:

"Proof in the dossier demonstrates that you participated in an infraction against Section 62 of the Elections Act."

I would like to ask the Prime Minister whether he has also read that part of the file and whether he thinks he has honorably fulfilled his responsibilities when reinstating in Cabinet a minister who had participated in an infraction, according to the same Commissioner who had conducted the investigation.

The Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as far as I know, it is not up to the Commissioner to decide whether a Member of Parliament is guilty or not. In our system, it is up to the courts to decide. According to the law, the officer of Parliament has the obligation to investigate and to decide whether charges are going to be laid or are not going to be laid against a Member of Parliament suspected of having