

The Budget—Mr. Rocheleau

new facility will be terminated as part of the government's overall restraint effort, and that is not true. That has nothing to do with any type of investment or capital cost. It is a twenty-year lease which was a part of the call for tenders.

Is this the result of a sudden change in the way Government runs its business? Is this how things will be from now on, the Government will call for tenders just to throw them in the waste basket and restart negotiations with people they did not want to deal with anymore? And I am talking here about Campeau Corporation whose lease is expiring in 1991 and to whom the Government was paying \$350 a square meter, when the lowest bids from a Quebec firm and an Ontario firm in the Ottawa Valley varied between \$200 and \$250 a square meter. It that the savings the federal government wants to make? That's not true.

More than that, Mr. Speaker, the federal Government, through the Public Works Department, will negotiate a new lease with Campeau for over \$300 a square metre, and will have to pay for renovations to this building that is in disrepair, to strip it of asbestos and to replace the heating system. Yet, Mr. Speaker, here is what is said in Treasury Board Order 774012 dated April 27, 1981, of which the English version I will quote is much more precise:

[English]

It states: "The entry into new or renewal leases should be avoided until any potentially hazardous condition has been corrected".

[Translation]

In this case, Mr. Speaker, Transport Canada's employees will be working in unsafe conditions because they will remain at work while the asbestos is removed from the building. That is contrary to a 1981 Treasury Board Order, contrary to an important regulation protecting the health of men and women who work for Transport Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Government to examine their conscience and reconsider the negotiation of a contract at the present location while bids submitted were much cheaper. The situation is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, it is indefensible. Indeed, Québec Premier Bourassa said yesterday in Hull that it was a great injustice to have renegotiated a lease and dealt with the Campeau firm even before the Budget was tabled in this House. This decision has deceived and wronged contractors who had

submitted bids in good faith, each spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to prepare and present those bids to the federal Government, to the Department of Public Works. The results of all those efforts have simply been thrown to the garbage.

Is this how tenders will be invited in the future, Mr. Speaker? Is it how openly the federal Government intends to operate? Is this the honesty and integrity the Canadian people can expect from this Government? Certainly not, Mr. Speaker, and certainly not for the future. If this is the way the Government intends to do things in the future, it is totally unacceptable, it is completely absurd, and it is contrary to all normal procedures and acceptable decency, Mr. Speaker. I would even say that the civil servants who work for Transport Canada are insulted by the decision of the Government to force them to stay in that building while they do some repairs to remove the asbestos. This will be done over the next five years, Mr. Speaker, while the employees remain onsite, although we know that asbestos is definitely hazardous to public health. We know that asbestos is carcinogenic and a few steps from here, we will let our employees work in unsafe conditions.

Mr. Speaker, it is totally unacceptable. Again I refer to a story published in today's *Le Droit* where it could be read that this Transport Canada case is beginning to smell bad. This case is smelling very bad indeed, Mr. Speaker. The tender process followed in this case is a shameless scandal. We, in the Official Opposition, cannot accept that this Government revert to the ways of the old days, the ways of Duplessis, and it is not because we have the little guy from Baie-Comeau at the head of the government that we have to revert to unacceptable and aberrant ways. All the more so since it has been recognized by the Trudeau government in 1969, in the legislation on the National Capital Region, that every building project of the federal Government in the National Capital Region should be examined so as to provide a good balance between both sides of the river.

• (1650)

And we wish, Mr. Speaker, that this Government would live up to former policies which have never been formally changed. And in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Government will improve somehow a situation which it has created itself and I hope also that in the next few days, it will revert to the bidding process as it has been requested, and thus show some respect for contractors who made the bids as well as for the