

Oral Questions

Will the Prime Minister commit to this House that his government's new guidelines, whenever they are released, will not consider old style patronage as an acceptable method of making hiring and contract decisions?

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the hon. member gets his information with regard to the context of guidelines which are to be released by the government.

I want to assure him however that the Prime Minister made a clear and unequivocal commitment to Canadians that this subject matter would be reviewed. The matter has been reviewed. We are in the throes of releasing those guidelines to the public. Members will then have an opportunity to assess their effectiveness.

I want to assure the hon. member the principles of competency, fiscal responsibility and transparency will be seen throughout those guidelines.

• (1450)

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious the ethics counsellor is long overdue. Can the Prime Minister tell us when this appointment will finally be made?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, soon.

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[Translation]

PURCHASES OF FLU VACCINE

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works, and it is a real question.

Strange things are happening in the Department of Public Works. In the procurement contract for flu vaccine purchased for the provinces, the minister, acting on his own initiative, split the contract equally between Connaught in Ontario and Bio Vac in Quebec. The minister says he found a Canadian solution to a Canadian problem. However, the contract share awarded to Connaught will be produced in the United States.

Since BioVac is offering these vaccines at \$1.70 per unit, why does the government insist on paying more—\$1.85 per unit—with its decision to purchase part of these vaccines in the United States, so that Quebec loses 26 high tech jobs and an investment project worth \$32 million will be cancelled?

[English]

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. Obviously the hon. member does not have all of the facts.

The hon. member should be aware that in previous years the amount of the contract awarded to the company from the province of Quebec was approximately 38 per cent over a three year average.

This year because of the representations made by the hon. member and her party, all of which we took into consideration, we were able to have an agreement in principle where both parties, Connaught industries from Ontario and BioVac from Quebec, would be able to split a contract on a 50:50 basis. Keep in mind that the Government of Canada purchased less than 1 per cent of the vaccine and 99 per cent of that particular contract was purchased by the other provinces across this country.

[Translation]

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, are we to conclude that the contract splitting was the result of pressure from ministers in Toronto, who prefer an approach that is more expensive and risky in terms of security and supply, to drum up business for a Toronto distributor, as opposed to awarding the whole contract to a Quebec manufacturer?

[English]

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, again I thank the hon. member for such a wonderful question.

I informed the hon. member and this House that two years ago in the province of Quebec BioVac did not get 50 per cent of the contract; 87 per cent of the contract went to the province of Ontario.

What we have provided under this particular regime is a 50:50 splitting of the contract. One per cent of that contract is purchased by the Government of Canada; 99 per cent is purchased by all the other provinces. If that is not equity I am sure the hon. member might want to go back to math school.

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YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

In Edmonton on April 17 in the early hours of the morning a young couple, ages 36 and 37, with their two children, ages 9 and 6, were wakened by a noise. The mother, thinking it was one of her children, went to investigate. Three young offenders had broken into their house. When she confronted them they promptly stabbed her to death.

When is this minister going to act by sending a clear message to violent young offenders that the experiments of the seventies were a failure and they will be treated henceforth as the vicious criminals they are?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, we all read with shock and horror the facts of the case to which the hon. member has referred. I do