

*Oral Questions*

Government. We learned today that Lette & Associates in fact learned of the land speculation in Saint-Jean and informed Oerlikon in January or early February of last year, and that Mr. Bazin and his firm became informed of land speculation in the winter or early spring of last year. Somehow they were not able to bring this together and have what they considered to be sufficient proof of irregularities until January, 1987. Can the Deputy Prime Minister explain the reason for this long delay between this information which suggested irregularities being in the hands of the company and its legal advisers, including Mr. Bazin, and this information being given to the Government? Will this be investigated?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** That question wouldn't even be good at Queen's Park.

**Mr. Speaker:** I must say to the Hon. Member, with great regret, that that question clearly involves activities which are not related to any Minister of the Government or to the Prime Minister. It is outside the ambit of ministerial responsibility.

Under the circumstances, Hon. Members have been asking for a public inquiry and I have allowed those questions. The Government has responded, as is recorded in *Hansard*. The question now being put is directed at some activity outside this place and outside the responsibility of a Minister.

The rules are quite clear. The Chair cannot allow the question. Perhaps the Hon. Member could seek to find the information he wishes or seek to find the intentions of the Government by rephrasing the question, keeping in mind the admonishment of the Chair.

**Mr. Cassidy:** Mr. Speaker, you make it a bit difficult to ask questions. I recognize that—

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Crosbie:** Ask proper questions.

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** If you can't take the heat, join the RCMP.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Learn the rules.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre and his colleagues remained courteously quiet while the Chair made the ruling that the Chair just made. I think equal courtesy is expected when the Hon. Member rises to put his question.

**Mr. Cassidy:** Could the Deputy Prime Minister inform the House how there will be an investigation of the curious circumstances under which neither Oerlikon, a company with a \$600-million contract with the Government, nor Mr. Bazin, its legal adviser and a top Conservative, came to inform the Government of certain irregularities for a period of some 10 months? Will this be subject to the RCMP investigation, or is it the Government's position that there will be no investigation

on these matters to which the people of Canada deserve to have an answer?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, first the Hon. Member asked for a legal opinion. Second, he asked a question which has been answered in this House on many, many occasions. He will just have to be patient and allow this to take place on a step-by-step basis.

There are some who would want a police investigation and a judicial inquiry going on at the same time. There are some who would rather have a judicial inquiry first and perhaps an RCMP investigation later. The Government has charted a course. It has turned this matter over to the RCMP for a complete and full investigation. The Prime Minister has left the door open if at any time during the course of those proceedings, or later, there is the necessity of the further involvement of a Parliamentary Committee or an inquiry of some sort. That option is still available. I wish the Hon. Member would accept that, because it seems to me that it is acceptable to most legal experts in the country—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I think the Hon. Minister has tried to meet the question that was asked and has given a response.

[*Translation*]

DELAY BY RCMP IN QUESTIONING MR. OUELLETTE AND FORMER MINISTER OF STATE (TRANSPORT)—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the Deputy Prime Minister.

Perhaps he could explain why, as we have just been informed, neither Mr. Ouellette nor the former Minister have been questioned by the RCMP. Furthermore, is the RCMP acting this way on instructions from the Government, which wants to avoid a public inquiry about the role played by Mr. Bazin and other friends of the Government?

[*English*]

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at the Hon. Member. He is now by inference suggesting that we should tell the RCMP how to conduct its investigation. The Government, the Prime Minister, myself and the Cabinet will not do that, I regret to inform him.

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**FISHERIES**

LICENCES GRANTED TO FRENCH FACTORY FREEZER TRAWLERS

**Mr. George Henderson (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The Minister has issued nine fishing licences to French factory freezer trawlers in 3PS. The Minister should know that one of