

Oral Questions

ACCESS TO INFORMATION—MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, in November, 1987, the Member for Burnaby put on the Order Paper questions concerning the contracts, the role of Mr. Anderson and the role of Mr. Leblanc. The answer which came last Thursday, June 30, 1988, said that the information could be obtained through Access to Information.

In light of the fact that when the Conservatives were in the opposition they said that the Liberals believed that Canadians did not have a right to know, but the Conservatives believed they had every right to know, why did the Minister then engage in a cover-up in providing that information to the public? In fact, Inger Hansen had to take legal action to try to get the information from Access to Information.

Mr. Jelinek: What absolute nonsense!

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, with the greatest of respect, the Hon. Member's suggestions are utterly without foundation. They are not correct.

Mr. Rodriguez: Ask Inger Hansen.

Mr. Kelleher: When I first learned of this, I asked the Comptroller General's office to conduct an audit. I received that report at the end of February this year and we immediately took action.

Mr. Rodriguez: Why did Robinson not get it?

Mr. Kelleher: All the information has been released to Mr. Robinson and the information was released to the media which asked for it. The reasons for the delay and the deletions concerned the Privacy Act and the third party rule.

AWARDING OF UNTENDERED CONTRACTS

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. It also concerns the awarding of over \$600,000 of untendered government contracts to CACI Canada Limited, a computer consulting firm.

As the Solicitor General knows, there was a deliberate, not inadvertent, breach of the conflict of interest guidelines and the Treasury Board guidelines. The Solicitor General knew about problems with this particular company in November, 1986, yet allowed the relationship to continue between CACI Canada Limited and Correctional Service of Canada.

Will the Solicitor General indicate to the House why he has refused to allow information about these improper practices to become public? Why did it take a Federal Court application by *The Globe and Mail* before the Solicitor General was prepared to release this information to the public? What was he hiding? Was it his own incompetence and negligence?

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I have already advised the other Hon. Member and again I advise this Hon. Member that when these facts came to my attention in the fall of 1987 I immediately went to the Comptroller General and commissioned an independent audit. I received the report at the end of February. An action plan was implemented. This action plan was approved both by the Comptroller General's office and the Treasury Board.

I can also advise the Hon. Member that one of the first instructions I gave to the new Commissioner of Corrections was to ensure that nothing of this nature ever happens again, to refer him to the action plan, and to ensure that fiscal control was observed at all times.

PUNITIVE ACTION QUERY

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, we are not talking about an inadvertent breach of federal guidelines, we are talking about a deliberate breach. For example, in one case a contract was doubled by the commissioner to over \$48,000. The contract was for \$24,000 and was doubled by the commissioner after the work was completed and when no additional work was done.

The Solicitor General indicates that remedial action was taken. I and the people of Canada would like to know specifically what punitive action was taken? Can he indicate whether the RCMP were called in to investigate the propriety of these practices as conducted by the former Commissioner of Corrections?

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I will be most happy to answer the Hon. Member's question. After receiving the report, I instructed my Deputy Minister to deliver the report to Justice and ask for an opinion from them. Justice reviewed the report. I was advised by Justice that on the facts disclosed there were no criminal offences. As a result of that written opinion from Justice, no further charges were laid with respect to this matter.

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IMMIGRATION

TREATMENT OF ENTREPRENEUR-CLASS IMMIGRANTS

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Recently *The Globe and Mail* reported that many wealthy people have paid as much as \$30,000 and more to get Canadian landing and citizenship through loopholes in the Government's entrepreneurial immigration law, without even having lived in or paid taxes in Canada, and that 14 members of a Toronto law firm are being investigated by the Law Society of Upper Canada in this connection.