

Oral Questions

Hon. Jean J. Charest (Minister of State (Youth)): Mr. Speaker, it was agreed upon by myself with Mr. Gaucher and Mr. Wright that they needed an analysis done and not a report on very specific issues concerning youth. We have an ongoing agreement to share in this research. That is why it was done in this way. It was agreed upon to use Secor because of the expertise they knew was there, and Canada Consulting Group was also used for the basis of the analysis we now have at our disposal.

AWARDING OF CONTRACT

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, we already had the Senate Committee on Youth reporting in February, 1986. We had the President of the University of Waterloo given a similar mandate in March, 1986. How can the Minister justify the fact that he only approached one contractor when the Treasury Board policy states that when a contract is over \$50,000 several contractors must be considered? How does he explain that?

● (1450)

Hon. Jean J. Charest (Minister of State (Youth)): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gaucher, Mr. Wright and myself agreed that this group was the best prepared. With respect to the very specific questions, we wanted it done rapidly at that time, which is a big difference between the way we operate and the way the previous Government operated. In March of 1983 the back-benchers of the Party of the Hon. Member signed a petition asking Cabinet for a military youth program, and in the same breath complained that the then Minister did not—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

CONFLICT OF INTEREST INQUIRY

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. It concerns a \$124,000 contract given to Secor. Does the Minister not consider it a conflict of interest to give this contract to Secor when Claude Forget is the Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry into Unemployment Insurance, which federal inquiry is making a major part of its study youth unemployment? Is it not a conflict of interest when a company in which he is a partner obtains a contract to study something he is already studying?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, there is no conflict of interest since the Forget Commission does have a mandate to inquire into unemployment insurance. There is no connection, in my opinion. We do not feel that the fact that they belong to the

same company creates a conflict of interest, and this is why both studies can be made at the same time by the same company without raising the possibility of a conflict of any kind.

INQUIRY WHY COMMISSION USED UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUNDS

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): So what is this all about, Mr. Speaker? The Commission also spent close to \$2 million more than provided in the Budget. Can the Minister explain why the commission used unemployment insurance funds instead of general revenues? Why did the commission carry out its inquiry by spending the money of Canadian workers, men and women alike, instead of general revenues? What does the Minister have to say about that?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): There are two questions, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the first one, the figures are false. We have spent, that is the Forget Commission so far has spent and will spend a maximum of \$5.2 million. Its appropriations were in excess of \$6 million, but they will not be totally expended; \$5.2 million is the official figure.

Second, I already answered the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East concerning the use of Unemployment Insurance Commission Fund; there is a provision under which we are authorized to use the general fund, this is why we did just that, and everything is quite normal.

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PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

REQUEST FOR REASSURANCE OF QUEBECERS

Mr. Gabriel Fontaine (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and deals with the pharmaceutical industry. In recent days, Quebecers have been very worried by the negative attitude of the leader of the Socialist party, who is making every effort to prevent a job-creating pharmaceutical industry from locating in Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, this massive and negative movement of Socialists against Quebec is of concern to us and I would like to ask the Minister to reassure my friends in Quebec.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): First, I would like to thank the Hon. Member for Lévis for asking this question. The Bill introduced in the House three weeks ago is good for Canada and for Quebec. Indeed, pharmaceutical companies have already announced several investments in Quebec. We expect this bill to produce over \$600 million in Quebec.