

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

the late Sir William Mulock or some other of the minister's predecessors may be fun, but it is hardly an explanation of this very serious and expensive problem.

Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Postmaster General and Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, it is very refreshing indeed to hear the hon. member say that he would like to really know what the facts are, what has been going on, and that he would like an inquiry. Having made so many speeches over the course of the last few months, I thought he knew all the facts of this matter, or what else could he have been talking about? Since he seems to have made me his pet hobby, even to following my appearance on television, I think the hon. member will realize that I do acknowledge his sincerity and his interest by always making myself available to reply to his demands for information.

With respect to the trucks, Mr. Speaker, they were bought for two reasons. First, the Goldenberg report required that we cancel, without cause, the contracts that had been given to the independent contractors. Obviously, when it was done "without cause" we had an obligation to them unless we wanted them to take us to court and suffer that particular kind of humiliation. So we carried out that aspect of the Goldenberg report and purchased the vehicles, 138 of them brand new. We paid for them a total of \$514,688.

May I now speak with respect to Lapalme. We gave them a one-year contract, on the basis that it would be for one year only. Therefore, we had to assume one of two possible courses of action. We had either to strike off the charge for the trucks entirely in the course of that one-year's operation, or we could undertake to buy them back at Lapalme's invoice cost, less 30 per cent depreciation which we had permitted him to charge for the year. The balance would accrue to us. As of today there were 441 vehicles, not 439, disposed of or accounted for. Our information is more complete now. Of these, 206 are in Montreal, 81 have been sent to Vancouver, one has been sent to Pickering, Ontario, 48 Lapalme vehicles—which are probably the scruffiest of the lot—have been declared surplus at a cost of some \$10,000, and there will be some recovery there. Another 17 are not needed and will be resold, and 88 will be available for national fleet requirements.

In addition, Montreal will need 32, Vancouver 12, Windsor 3, Quebec City 1, Saint

John, New Brunswick, 1, Mississauga 5, Pointe Claire 10 and Lachine 7. We are saving on the operation an annual cost of \$2 million a year.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS—ACCESS FOR HANDICAPPED PERSONS—MEETING OF APPROVED STANDARDS

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, earlier today I asked the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Laing) the following question: "In view of the need of our handicapped citizens, especially those confined to wheelchairs, to have proper access both to all our public buildings and to their facilities, I would ask if all federal public buildings specifications could include those standards which have been approved in the National Building Code under their supplement No. 7 entitled 'Building Standards for the Handicapped'". In view of the need for our handicapped citizens, especially those confined to wheelchairs, to have easy access to all federal public buildings and their facilities, I would ask the minister if the building specifications for federal public buildings include the recommendations outlined in the National Building Code—Supplement No. 7 entitled, "Building Standards for the Handicapped".

I welcome this opportunity to expand briefly on the need for standards for public buildings of the future to make them accessible to handicapped people. At present many of our public buildings in the federal, provincial, municipal and private fields make absolutely no provision for easy and adequate access to our handicapped citizens; nor are any of the facilities within these structures designed to accommodate the needs of handicapped people. It is a fact that many of our handicapped citizens are fully self-supporting. Many more have the skills and the determination to live a fuller and more productive life but find that a number of society-made obstacles, which could easily be prevented, often stand in their way. It is for this reason that I have asked if the building specifications for all federal public buildings could insist on certain mandatory regulations which would give our handicapped citizens the proper access to and the use of the facilities of our public buildings, to which use they are fully entitled.

The State of Pennsylvania, for example, prohibits the construction of public buildings without provision for easy access by disabled people. Our federal government should pass similar legislation and should urge the ten