

Oral Questions

matter which in fact involves the conduct of Ministers of the Crown as it relates to the exercise of their responsibilities to the Parliament of Canada?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, on May 9 in the House of Commons, the Member for Nickel Belt, speaking on behalf of his Party, asked for the appointment of a judicial inquiry into this matter. This is exactly what we have done.

ROLE OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will also know that on May 9 I asked that the House of Commons Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure make the inquiry. Does the Prime Minister not understand that it is more appropriate for Members of Parliament to pass judgment on the ethical standards of their peers than it is to ask a judge to come down with an inquiry which cannot satisfy either side in the argument, no matter how careful he is?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member's colleague, the Member for Nickel Belt, specifically asked on behalf of his Party for the appointment of a judicial inquiry necessary to have—

Mr. Althouse: He is the House Leader.

Mr. Mulroney: Are you repudiating your own colleague? You better be careful because he has quite a temper. He asked for the appointment of a judicial inquiry and that is exactly what we have done. I am sorry that there is disarray in the NDP, but that is not unusual.

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[Translation]

SHIPYARDS

REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF CONTRACT AWARDED TO
DAVIE SHIPBUILDING LIMITED OF LAUZON

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs or the Minister of State for Small Businesses. Could the Minister confirm that the contract for the CN Marine ferry awarded last March to Davie Shipbuilding Limited at Lauzon contained a provision asking the president of Davie, Mr. Saunders, to meet with the various parties involved in the Quebec shipbuilding industry with a view to rationalizing these shipyards? Is that correct? Yes or no?

Hon. André Bissonnette (Minister of State (Small Businesses)): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the day before and the day

before that, I said that the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion had asked parties across the country—

Mr. Malépart: Does the contract contain a provision, yes or no?

Mr. Bissonnette: I mentioned that we had asked the people involved in our shipyards across the country to get together and let us know the best way to upgrade and increase the productivity of Canada's shipbuilding industry.

REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION CONCERNING SOREL SHIPYARDS

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, the Minister doesn't want to answer the question because he is ashamed. Why does the Minister refuse to say that the CN Marine contract contains a provision in which Mr. Saunders is asked to meet with the industry with a view to rationalizing and phasing out the shipyards at Sorel? Why won't the Minister admit that a provision exists, and if it does not, why doesn't he table the contract in the House?

Hon. André Bissonnette (Minister of State (Small Businesses)): Mr. Speaker, no, there is no provision that says Mr. Saunders is to shut down the Sorel shipyard.

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[English]

PUBLIC WORKS

AWARDING OF UNTENDERED CONTRACTS

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. Yesterday the Minister of Public Works said that the Government has a godfather system whereby Conservative MPs can obtain information and occasionally other things from the Government for Conservative supporters in opposition ridings in Quebec. I assume this also applies outside the Province of Quebec. Since one half of the contracts are not tendered, will the Prime Minister explain why the Government not only looks at the merit of the applications but also at whom the applicants supported in the last federal election campaign?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, it is not unknown to political Parties to have Members of Parliament going into ridings that they do not represent in order to see whether or not they can either receive the benefit of advice in those ridings or convey some of the truth as they see it in those ridings. There is nothing unusual about this, and any suggestion that this is some sort of sinister arrangement would mean that all those New Democrats who come to Saskatoon West should be kicked out.

Mr. Broadbent: They are not coming with government contracts.