

Routine Proceedings

received \$5,000 per month from Perez for several years. The chairman of Canada Post had his hotel in Spain paid for by Perez and his son received over \$100,000 from Perez.

We have more proof. An associate of Perez considered the payments to the chairman's son as part of the Canada Post deal. There is the proof.

Will the Prime Minister prove to Canadians that he has the high ethical standards that he claims to have by authorizing a full, independent investigation into the scandal?

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite has raised this question on a previous occasion.

It would be inappropriate for the government to do anything because an RCMP investigation is presently under way. Proceedings are taking place under the Bankruptcy Act. This question was put to the president of the Canada Post Corporation when he appeared before the standing committee.

I understand the hon. member's desire to make further accusations against the individuals involved but it would be highly inappropriate for us to take action until those proceedings come to a full and complete ending. Thereafter decisions can be made.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the bankruptcy investigation is one thing. The ongoing business of Mr. Perez with the government is what the government ought to be concerned about and that is current.

Mr. Perez is still very much a player here in Ottawa and seeking government contracts. My question is specifically for the Prime Minister.

Has he at any time received money from Perez? If so, is this clouding his decision—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Colleagues, both the questions and the answers today have been quite forceful. I suggest with all respect to the hon. member that the question is impugning great motive. I would like him to withdraw the question if he would.

I will permit him to rephrase another question but I would like him to withdraw that question if he would.

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, my sincere apologies. I meant no disrespect. I apologize and I withdraw the phrase.

I would like the Prime Minister to state very clearly to us what his reason is for not advancing an investigation with respect to the current operations of Mr. Perez and the dealings of the government. It is a matter of ethics.

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issue should be very clear to the hon. member.

An RCMP investigation is under way. Proceedings before the bankruptcy court are taking place. For any minister of the crown, including the Prime Minister, to take any other kind of action would be inappropriate.

I suggest to the hon. member that he wait for the appropriate time when all of the proceedings are concluded. Thereafter decisions will be made.

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• (1500)

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

During the appearance of Assistant Deputy Minister Comeau before the agriculture and agri-food committee last week, extensive reference was made to memos written by officials of agriculture Canada that left the impression the government might not be fully supportive of the supply management system.

Could the minister clarify the issue and give his commitment to the government's support for supply management?

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the documents referred to in the hon. member's question, I am advised that Madam Comeau was not the author of the documents being complained about. That material was prepared for the previous federal government, before October 1993, and not for this government.

We have defended Canada's supply management system. If our Canadian supply management system is at some future date challenged by some legal means, by the United States or any others, Canadians may rest assured that we will continue our strong defence of supply management because we believe it is right as a matter of trade policy and trade law.

The Speaker: This brings to a conclusion the question period for today.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

**COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON THE BLOOD SYSTEM
IN CANADA**

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure to table, in both official languages, a