

Anti-Dumping Tribunal

problem with respect to him as he is continuing in his post. However, the minister did not make it clear whether he had answered the guidelines at the time he was to answer them. Having regard to the situation in which Mr. Bissonnette must find himself, and his desire, I am sure, as well as that of the government, to avoid any suspicion of wrongdoing on his part, has the minister considered putting his case to the Canadian Judicial Council? I understand his reason with respect to Mr. Gauthier.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): In the case of Mr. Bissonnette, both from documentary evidence that was available, and from his personal declaration, it was clear that he had not been a participant with Mr. Gauthier in the rather extensive conferences, exchanges of telexes and other transactions which had occurred in the past eight months. The interest of Mr. Bissonnette was as an investor in one company which was involved in these transactions in which he has the position of director. His other interest dated back to the time when he was in private law practice and when he remained on the board of a number of private companies in which he retained no pecuniary interest.

It seemed to me, on the facts of that case, that there was no evidence of conflict of interest, strictly speaking, and that there was no multiplicity of transactions to indicate that he had been failing in his duties as a member of the tribunal. Evidence would indicate that there was a potential conflict because he is director or officer of a company, but there was no evidence of an actual conflict. It would seem to me to be unfair, under the circumstances, because of that relationship, to refer the situation to the Canadian Judicial Council. Naturally, if other evidence came to light I would have to consider the suggestion of the hon. member, and that would then be the appropriate course of action.

Mr. Beatty: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for the attempts he has made to give us as full replies as possible to our questions. I listened with a great deal of interest to the reply he gave to my colleague, the hon. member for Central Nova. I hope the minister will correct me if I am wrong, but if I understood him correctly, he said that there was no substantial use of government facilities by Mr. Gauthier for his private business purposes. Could the minister indicate to the House what he meant by "no substantial use of government facilities for personal business", and also could he detail to the House what evidence he has, if any, of Mr. Gauthier's use of government facilities for private business purposes?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): It did become clear that Mr. Gauthier had had a number of meetings in his office with people who were there, not about tribunal business but in relation to transactions about which we were speaking. Indeed, some of the correspondence that was on file might well have been typed by the staff of the Anti-Dumping Tribunal.

One of the questions upon which we focused was whether, in the course of the rather extensive travels in which the chairman was involved as a member of the board, he had charged the government for what was essentially a trip on private business. We could find no evidence of that, although it was clear in one case that while he was in Sweden on business of the tribunal on a pending case he

had taken some days off, part of which time was devoted to meeting the principals involved in one of these transactions. It is in that sense that I used the words "not substantial use of facilities"—in particular, not charging for any extensive travel.

Mr. Beatty: In elaborating on the answer which the minister gave, has the minister been able to find any information which would suggest that, for example, Mr. Gauthier's travels abroad were timed deliberately to coincide with his desire to travel abroad on business purposes? Also, the minister indicated previously that Mr. Gauthier took some time off while in Sweden to conduct personal business. Could the minister indicate whether, when Mr. Gauthier was conducting private business during the time when he would customarily be employed by the government, he reimbursed the public treasury for his salary for those days? Also, could the minister indicate whether there was any reimbursement of the public purse for any transportation costs which were carried by the government if Mr. Gauthier was able to conduct his private business during a trip which was paid for by the government?

● (1550)

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, as I said, if the chairman in that particular case was in Sweden for the purpose of the business of the tribunal, in that sense the expense to the Crown was no greater than it would have been if that was all he had done. As to payments back, I cannot specifically respond to that. I can inquire further. I would have been inclined, from the inquiries, to have said that this is not the appropriate subject for civil action for an accounting and payment back to the government. However, I think it would be appropriate to make some inquiries in this regard to see whether further proceedings of that kind might be taken. I have not passed judgment on that question at this point.

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COMBINES INVESTIGATION ACT**AMENDMENT TO EMPOWER ATTORNEY GENERAL TO TAKE ACTION FOR PERSONS DAMAGED BY VIOLATION OF THE ACT**

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-441, to amend the Combines Investigation Act (*ex relatione* class actions).

Some hon. Members: Explain.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to provide Canadians from one end of the country to the other with the right to class actions in the Federal Court of Canada, a right which they do not presently have.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, this is not the time that there can be formal introduction of the appropriation bills, but