

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Speaker: The honorable member for Lac-Saint-Jean on a supplementary.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean): To start with, I wish to thank the minister for explaining to us the ins and outs of the resolution adopted by the Quebec caucus. My question to him is this: Can the government—since there is a government in front of us—through its minister, tell us if it accepts the principle that Quebec has the right to self-determination? That is my question, Mr. Speaker!

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, I repeat again to the member for Lac-Saint-Jean that—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Bouchard (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, when the member for Lac-Saint-Jean was minister, he did not appreciate such outcries. I would hope that he will behave in the same manner now that he is across the way.

What I say to him is this: It is a resolution adopted by a wing of our party, the Conservative wing of the Conservative Party. Mr. Speaker, the government deals with recommendations the same way the Liberals and other parties do.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: I would think that under the circumstances hon. members would give the minister the courtesy of hearing his response. He is trying to make a very extensive response to a question which the House has consented to hear, when that would not ordinarily be the case. The hon. minister.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, indeed, I think the debate is too serious and the matter too fundamental to be treated in a partisan way in the House of Commons. I am sure there are partisan intentions behind the question. At a time when we are discussing once again those fundamental issues, the Quebec wing of the Conservative party made a recommendation to the government which will deal with it according to the normal process. Therefore, because of the seriousness of the issue, I think we should avoid any partisanship, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, because I think you have ruled, and very rightly, that it was essential that the

question put to the cabinet had to do with governing operations. The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean rephrased his question which was then in order. He asked the minister whether the Tory government was willing as a matter of government policy, to accept the resolution passed by the Quebec Tory wing at their convention over the weekend. Now, the minister, and this explains my point of order, Mr. Speaker, in rising to answer a question which you had then ruled in order, took the opportunity to answer, not as a minister and member of the Canadian cabinet but strictly as a militant Tory politician from Quebec as if he had been dealing with this question at a political convention. Hence his answer was not in order since it did not give the government's real answer that is whether or not they accept as government this resolution passed by militants over the weekend.

Mr. Gauthier: That is the question.

Mr. Speaker: The best solution might be for him to ask another question tomorrow.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

SIXTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The public accounts committee's sixth report, which I have the honour to table today, deals with controls over grants administered by federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations.

The committee identified a number of procedures which, if adopted by grant-giving agencies, would improve controls and accountability for grants. For example, the committee recommended co-ordination of instalment payments with enhanced reporting and monitoring of grants where the size or the dollar value of the grant makes it cost-effective to do so.

Another major recommendation in the report dealt with the accountability of granting agencies for repeat funding of the same organization year after year and called for triennial reports to Parliament on recurring grants, justifying them in terms of competing demands