

Point of Order—Mr. Hnatyshyn
GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING PROGRAMS

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Madam Speaker, my point of order flows from an answer given by the Minister of State for Multiculturalism (Mr. Fleming) who has responsibility for the government's advertising programs, in response to a question raised by my colleague, the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Gustafson), last Monday.

This point of order has to do with the address given by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) last night in Regina and the advertising which took place in advance of that particular function. I have in my hand, and I will present to you, Madam Speaker, a photocopy of some of the advertising that was placed in various newspapers in Saskatchewan before the Prime Minister's speech. By a scrutiny of this particular advertisement, Madam Speaker, you will be able to see that it is authorized by the Government of Canada, with the official Canada logo affixed to that particular advertisement.

These advertisements are very expensive. The difficulty I have, in terms of the response which was given to the question raised by my colleague from Assiniboia, is that I think the minister unintentionally misled the House to indicate that there was no government expenditure with respect to this particular program in the advertising for the dinner.

To compound this situation, the information in the advertisement under the logo of the Government of Canada is false, incorrect, and misleading. Listed in this advertisement are a number of organizations and associations, such as the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association, and the Palliser Wheat Growers Association purporting to be "hosting organizations". That is false, and incorrect. It is not true. These organizations were not hosting. They had withdrawn. I do not know how many other organizations in Saskatchewan were listed as hosting organizations that would have withdrawn prior to this meeting.

● (1510)

I have copies of press reports which verify the fact that even though this was known to whomever put the ad in the paper, that the organizations had withdrawn their support, they went ahead and published this misleading advertisement for the Prime Minister's visit to Regina. For example, I quote from the Palliser Wheat Growers Association press release of October 27 wherein president George Fletcher advised that for "The Prime Minister's Evening with the People of Saskatchewan" on Wednesday, October 29, their association had been invited to have their members buy tickets and attend as guests.

The difficulty I have in connection with this point of order is that the minister indicated in his response that the government had not contributed financially to this advertising campaign for the dinner. Today in the media across Saskatchewan, Mr. Ralph Langdale, the executive assistant to Senator Hazen Argue, reaffirmed that the government spent no money—this is, one way or the other. Either there has been an expenditure of public funds on misleading information, wrong, incorrect, a public lie in the newspapers of Saskatchewan, or they have not contributed financially, whereupon it is incumbent upon the

minister or the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet) to launch an investigation to determine who is using the logo of the Government of Canada unlawfully, and misrepresenting the position of this government.

My point of order is this. The minister was either incorrect in his answer on Monday with respect to the support and funding of this so-called extravaganza, "The Prime Minister's Evening with the People of Saskatchewan", or not. The Prime Minister's evening was terminated after television coverage was cut off. The Prime Minister abruptly quit his speech and left the people of Saskatchewan. I can assure hon. members that in terms of the crowd that received the Prime Minister there were bigger crowds at executions during the French revolution.

The minister has a duty to stand in this House and explain his answer, to admit it was false, or undertake to make an investigation with respect to the use of the logo of the Government of Canada in this connection.

Hon. Jim Fleming (Minister of State, Multiculturalism): Madam Speaker, I am not sure how that rates as a point of order, but I want to respond to the hon. member. I will leave aside all the foofaraw about the attendance of various groups and so on. I obviously played no role with regard to who was invited, who was not invited, who came and who did not.

When I responded, as memory serves me, because I had no notice of this until a few moments ago when it was waved at me from across the floor, in the question the other day I was asked if the Government of Canada or the taxpayers of Canada were paying for a broadcast of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). I said I had no knowledge of any such payment. I do know the broadcast was paid for by the Liberal Party of Canada. I know in fact that no time had been bought at that point. It was purchased later, although arrangements were under way. It was paid for. The ad I had not seen and had not approved, and I will look into it.

Mr. Bill McKnight (Kindersley-Lloydminster): Madam Speaker, may I just respond to what my colleague from Saskatoon West mentioned about the reply the minister gave to our colleague from Assiniboia.

In obtaining tickets for the centennial auditorium or the Centre of the Arts in Regina, when they requested the purchase of tickets the telephone number of Senator Hazen Argue's office was given out. The person responsible, the contact person in that office, was a Mr. Bob Lyster, who happens to be an employee of the people of Canada, not of the Liberal Party of Canada. At the same time, another defeated Liberal candidate from Saskatchewan, also listed as an employee of the Government of Canada, was soliciting purchases for the same tickets from a government office in Regina. It was a government office, not the office of the Liberal Party of Canada. The point about the logo of the Government of Canada being used for a fund raising dinner for the Liberal party in Saskatchewan is that this is a misuse, and there was misinformation contained in the advertisement.