

There was no clear acknowledgment by individuals within the administration of responsibility or accountability for the financial viability of the new airport complex once in operation.

There were inadequate general area and cost criteria, based on comparable Canadian or foreign facilities, against which to monitor the project.

I recognize that that airport in appearance is palatial, but can we afford to operate it, especially when one looks at the cost overruns?

On the other side of the coin we have airports all across Canada. Think of the airport at Castlegar which the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Brisco) asked about the other day. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) would not provide adequate facilities for that airport. Then the hon. member from Esquimalt continually asks about getting radar for the Victoria airport, to no avail. But the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce wants to act in a grandiose manner and be the key contractor for the airport in Trinidad. I say if the government is the key contractor, can Trinidad afford it?

And so it follows, if the government wants to negotiate trade, and it keeps on saying that it wants to privatize everything—the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said a few days ago how profit is honourable and he believes in the private sector—why did the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce not tell the government of Trinidad that Canada has many consulting engineers and engineering firms who are perfectly competent to do that work that Trinidad needs? The minister could tell representatives of the Trinidad government that he would find out whether our consulting firms would give expertise to the government of Trinidad, and through the Export Development Bank or one of the government agencies make sure that we could finance the \$10 million that is being talked about. If the government really believes in private enterprise, why did it not take that route? But rather than do that, this government with its centralist view would prefer to work through the Department of Transport and pretend that the officials of that department can act in an adequate way as key contractors for the project.

I think the people of Canada deserve a straightforward, candid, honest answer on how much this will cost the government of Trinidad if our government is to be the key contractor. How much is the business community in Canada going to lose because the government is acting as the agent rather than providing the liaison so that private enterprise, the engineering firms and consultants in Canada, can do that work? We deserve some straight answers.

How many other commitments do we add that are not recorded in this memorandum? We will never know, as we found out relative to the deals that were made with Cuba. How many years will it take before we learn what the whole picture really is?

● (2230)

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Loiselle (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased

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to answer the erroneous questions of the hon. member, because the role of the Government of Canada in that agreement we signed with Trinidad-Tobago will not be to act as the key contractor, but rather to provide the government of Trinidad-Tobago with the consultants required for carrying out those projects.

Mr. Friesen: That is not what you said.

Mr. Loiselle (Chambly): Please, listen. As much for the two proposed airports totalling \$150 million as for the proposed penitentiary we will have to build. The only role the Department of the Solicitor General and the Department of Transport will have to play, will be to define with the government of Trinidad-Tobago a schedule for those projects and, then ask Canadian consulting engineers to provide the expertise to carry out the contract.

The other role of the Government of Canada will be through the EDC to provide the financing.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is as simple as that. About that contract with Trinidad-Tobago, I believe last week when I was in Toronto with perhaps the 15 biggest construction and consulting businessmen in Canada, everyone agreed that the attitude of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Horner) in this specific project had been excellent. And I would like to come back to the hon. member who wants to talk about Mirabel. I would like to come back to the hon. member who would like to talk about certain other projects we should be ashamed of in Canada. I would like to say to the hon. member that as someone who travelled across this country, who has friends in the consulting business, Mirabel would be the glory of about any country. And when someone tells me that it is a mistake to have done what we did, I say that the only mistake the government made in that case was perhaps using project managers rather than civil servants to carry out the whole project and if that is the hon. member's defence of private enterprise as he sees it, that is bullshit and he is wrong. As it happens, the hon. member is talking out of context because Mirabel can be held as an example to every other country, as all experts agree.

As concerns our projects for penal institutions, we have consulting engineers in Quebec and in the other provinces whom we can hold as an example to others for the implementation of such projects, precisely because of the wish of the Canadian government to show confidence in our Canadian experts. However, when the hon. member makes erroneous statements, as I said a moment ago when I called another member a "liar," which I amended by saying that he was straying a bit far from the truth, this has really been his trademark in the last few months.