

*Government Orders*

contracts are awarded—sometimes, maybe, to friends of the government, since it might be helpful during an election campaign. He was appointed president of Paxport and hired all the lobbyists who were to work on the privatization project for Paxport Inc. This Mr. Hession left his job as president in December 1992, after Paxport's bid was accepted by the federal government. He was to be replaced by Don Matthews's son, Jack, as reported in the *Ottawa Citizen*, on September 26, 1993.

There was also Mr. Fred Doucet, a Conservative lobbyist and Brian Mulroney's former chief of staff. He was also a senior advisor during Kim Campbell's campaign and was hired by Jack Matthews five days after Mr. Hession left his job as president. Three weeks later, Paxport created a consortium with its rival, Claridge Properties. Then there was Mr. Jean Corbeil, a former Conservative transport minister, who signed the agreement while all the attention was focused on the leaders' debate, during the election campaign. He had been Minister of Transport for less than three months but, already, there were information leaks to the effect that he was bent on privatizing Pearson airport.

Then there was Mr. Robert Nixon, the investigator appointed by the current Prime Minister, who recommended that the contract be cancelled and who is a former Treasurer of Ontario under the Liberal government of Mr. Peterson, as well as a former leader of the Ontario Liberal Party.

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There was also Ms. Kim Campbell. Internal documents given to her last August supposedly described the risks associated with the transaction, and in particular the fee increase for carriers, which would have cost taxpayers a lot of money.

We also asked the Standing Committee on Transport to summon the current Minister of Transport, and this request was agreed to.

We made all those requests not only to get the information I referred to earlier, but also to prove that, despite the fact that lobbyist fees are not compensated under this bill, taxpayers will still have to pay part of the expenses incurred by the corporations to make up for the lost tax revenues due to the corporate tax exemption for lobbying services.

What we wanted to ask the minister and what we did manage to ask him was: How can you justify the involvement of taxpayers in a patronage transaction? This fact alone justifies a public inquiry.

Also, the Minister of Transport himself stated that lobbying services should not be tax deductible, as reported by the *Ottawa Citizen* on March 9, 1994.

We also wanted to hear from Air Canada representatives, who were involved in this deal, since the government negotiated a decrease in rent for the next few years in return for a commitment by the corporation to remain at terminals 1 and 2 at the Pearson airport in Toronto.

We asked to hear from Mr. William Rowat, assistant deputy minister at Transport Canada, who was appointed by the past Clerk of the Privy Council to help move things along. You have to remember that he was appointed in March of 1993.

We also asked to hear from Mr. Bob Wright, closely tied to the Liberal Party of Canada, who is negotiating, secretly of course, the compensation to be awarded to the consortium.

We wanted to hear from the Toronto Airport Authority, a public agency similar to the Aéroports de Montréal organization, which wanted to be considered as a potential manager for Terminals 1 and 2, but claims to have been intentionally overlooked by the Conservatives.

We asked to hear from Ms. Huguette Labelle and, finally, from Mr. Robert Vineberg, Pearson Development Corporation's lawyer and board member.

In each and every one of these 18 cases, there were discussions in the committee on transport as to whether or not to call these witnesses before the committee. If the Liberals have nothing to hide, why did they refuse systematically to summon the people on our list so that we could clarify this deal?

Let us start with Mr. Robert Nixon, a key player in this issue. Mr. Nixon was the one who carried out the inquiry into Pearson Development Corporation at the request of the current Liberal Prime Minister. Last November, he recommended that the deal signed by the Conservatives and the Pearson Development Corporation be declared void.

Yet, the Liberals have refused to ask Mr. Nixon to appear before the committee on transport. Our resolution was defeated, four to two, by the Liberal majority. Is this normal? Do they have something to hide?

As for Mr. Robert Wright, who is no less important than Mr. Nixon, the answer of the Liberal majority in the committee was the same: "No." Believe it or not, only six of the 18 people I invited were heard by the committee. These were Mr. Ray Hession, the current Minister of Transport, Mr. Peter Coughlin, Mr. Don Matthews, someone from Air Canada and Mr. Robert Vineberg, representing Pearson Development Corporation.