

government's media space and time requirements. They recommend adjustments to advertising plans. They order media time and space from suppliers and ensure that we benefit from all the advantages of bulk placement. Between January, 1981, and mid-December, 1981, the net savings to the Government of Canada under the "agency of record" concept were in the order of \$1.6 million. This does not count for the improved effectiveness which we achieved through better placement.

Third, we expanded the role of my own department. It now contracts with the "agency of record" as well as with advertising agencies for planning, creative and production services. In addition to making payments to the agencies, the Department of Supply and Services pays the government's advertising media suppliers, which in the past all too often had to wait months for payment because of the inconsistencies between various government departmental systems. Now we are in a much better position to realize sizeable economies by capturing discounts offered by media suppliers to encourage prompt payment of their invoices.

Since the beginning of the new system, my department has been able to save in excess of \$330,000 in the area of prompt payment discounts. Let me explain, because there has been much confusion with the hyperboles launched by hon. members opposite, as to how the system works. A sponsoring department will submit its advertising program to the cabinet committee on communications for review, program approval and concurrence on the budget. It then makes the final selection of the advertising agency best suited to do the planning, creative and production elements. The decisions of the cabinet committee are communicated to the ministers responsible and to myself who, as Minister of Supply and Services, has the sole contracting authority for government advertising. Under this authority my department sets up the contractual arrangements between the sponsoring department and the advertising agency for planning, creative and production services and with the "agency of record" for all media placements. DSS monitors the progress of the creative and production aspects of advertising programs and makes adjustments to the contracts where necessary. At the end of the day we pay the advertising agency for the work it has done. We also, as I described earlier, pay the media suppliers from whom the "agency of record" orders media space and time. At no time—and this is not in accordance with what went on when the Tories were in power—does money owing to the media pass through the Agency of Record. The "agency of record" has its own media-buying services, paying the suppliers and the agencies and being in constant conflict of interest. That is how the system works.

● (2050)

Now I would like to comment on some of the characteristics of government advertising. Federal government messages are often targeted to large segments. We do not advertise in the same way as the private sector. The private sector can have a very short campaign which it targets to a very limited group. The private sector does not have to go through translation. Our

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campaigns must sometimes be translated into 11 or 12 languages, and we must, of necessity, advertise to the entire Canadian population. We cannot limit our advertising to certain areas. We must cover as wide a base as possible, and that makes advertising much more extensive.

In the private sector, advertisers can in effect run the same message again and again until its usefulness has passed. We cannot do that. Usually our advertising programs are on short notice for a short period of time because of the given program with which we are dealing. I therefore suggest that it would be unfair to compare the two systems.

We have heard the speech of the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker). He delivered himself of a fine after-dinner address. I hope that his food digests better than his thoughts. I would indicate that it is exactly the sort of performance which makes government advertising necessary. It is the sort of hyperbole which really twists veracity.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** The truth hurts, J.-J.

**Mr. Blais:** I am not saying that he is telling untruths. I am just saying that he is stretching the truth to a point where it is hardly recognizable.

If Your Honour will recall, in this House we have been dealing with the metric system.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** I did not mention the metric system.

**Mr. Blais:** I know. The hon. member was honest enough not to mention the metric system because he knows how hon. members on the other side—

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** I ran out of time.

**Mr. Blais:** —have been using the metric system in order to make political hay. They have been distributing all sorts of information throughout the country. I will not say it is untruthful. I am too much of a parliamentarian for that. However, it really stretches the credulity of Canadians.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Explain!

**Mr. Blais:** They have even implied that somehow metrication is something of a Liberal government conspiracy. They have also advised the Canadian public that it was never approved by Parliament. The metric system was introduced to Canada back in 1871 by the greatest of Liberals, a fellow named John A. Macdonald, at the time when we really, in effect, introduced the decimal system to our monetary system. He was the one who introduced it.

As to whether it was passed in Parliament, eight separate times in this House we dealt either with resolutions or amendments resisting legislation concerning the metric system. These gentlemen on the other side would want the Canadian public to believe that that has been the case. Now I hear the whip for the Tories on the other side. He was the one who, in 1975, as a great Canadian, said in the House in relation to the metric system, "We will support it"—

**Mr. Kempling:** That is right.