

Prime Minister at the public trough, even if they were good campaign workers? Is this another case of a friend in greed being a friend indeed?

[Translation]

**Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of Supply and Services):** Mr. Speaker, I should like first of all to clarify the situation. Roger Nantel and Nantel Communications are not registered with our Department of Supply and Services, therefore, they have never been awarded advertising contracts. We have awarded contracts to Media Canada Inc., which is a firm devoted to placing ads in various media. Mr. Speaker, could anybody blame the Government for following the normal process and obtaining the best value for its dollars? That is what we got from Media Canada Inc.

AWARDING OF ADVERTISING CONTRACTS—HOLDING OF PUBLIC HEARINGS BY PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Mr. Speaker, I have a whole file of contracts awarded to Mr. Nantel and his companies. It is clear that being a friend of the Prime Minister can be a rewarding experience. Is the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister prepared to authorize immediately the holding of public hearings by a Parliamentary committee to bring about a more equitable distribution of advertising contracts instead of having them awarded to "pals" of the party in power?

**Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of Supply and Services):** Mr. Speaker, I have just explained that Media Canada Inc. is not an advertising agency but a firm devoted to placing ads in various media. The Liberal Government had such arrangements itself. Media Canada Inc. is a decentralized organization, and we get the job done at a lower cost than with the agency chosen by the previous administration. Can anybody blame us for carrying out a decentralization and getting the best value for our money?

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[English]

## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

### VIOLENCE IN SRI LANKA

**Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton—Strathcona):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Approximately 2,000 Canadians of Sri Lankan origin demonstrated outside this building earlier today. Will the Minister tell us what information he has obtained from Colombo and whether Canada will be prepared to perform a mediation role if invited to do so?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, we have not been invited to perform a mediation role. It would be inappropriate for me to comment

on an invitation we have not received. We are deeply troubled by the continuing violence in Sri Lanka, and in particular by the killing of some 29 Buddhist priests. We hope both parties will agree to return to negotiations that have been disrupted and which were based on proposals made on December 19.

I expect that the Hon. Member, who has taken an interest in these questions for a long time, had an opportunity to meet with interested Canadians and others who were demonstrating today. I would welcome hearing from him directly any recommendations he may want to bring to my attention.

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## CANADA POST CORPORATION

### SERVICE TO BUSINESS COMMUNITY

**Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Post Office. I am sure he is aware that in places like Winnipeg, Manitoba; London, Ontario; and Hamilton, Ontario the Post Office is cutting back on service to the business community. Instead of delivering mail, as it has up until now, twice a day in the downtown business districts, delivery has been reduced to once a day.

Is the Minister prepared to intervene to restore this service, or is this just a natural consequence of his orders to the Post Office to eliminate its deficit and not be involved in any revenue-generating activities?

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, when the Canada Post Corporation was formed as a Crown corporation in 1981 with the agreement of all Parties in the House it was for the purpose of eliminating political interference so that we would not have situations of Ministers interfering to do this or that according to the political exigencies of the day. I think that is a good policy and it is a policy that I am following.

My recollection of the conclusions of the Marchment Committee Report is that the most important thing that people wanted was assurance that the mail would be delivered on time. The Post Office is working toward that goal and is making some progress. As I have pointed out in the House before, independent auditors will report to this House and the country once every three months on how well the Post Office is succeeding.

**Mr. Keeper:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Minister recognizes the difference between political interference and his responsibility to provide policy direction for the Post Office.

### BUSINESS COMMUNITY PETITIONS

**Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister should know that not only do people want their mail delivered on time, they want good service. We have begun to receive petitions which indicate quite clearly that the