

Oral Questions

Taxation Canada quotas have been in existence for some time, and senior staff in the Regional Office of Taxation in Vancouver literally attempted to cover up the evidence of such quotas by using typewriter white-out fluid on all internal memoranda which referred to these quotas.

In view of the fact that the Regional Director of Taxation has obviously misled the public in the Vancouver area with respect to the existence of quotas, and the circumstances of this cover-up, by using white-out typewriter fluid, will the Minister explain to the House the sequence of events in this incredible situation? Would he order an independent inquiry into the circumstances which led to this? In view of the actions of the Regional Director in misleading the public, will he suspend the Regional Director pending the outcome of that internal inquiry?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): First of all, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I was astonished at the comments the Hon. Member made to the press after that incident. I thought he was quite concerned and I maintain that he is probably one of the most concerned Members when it comes to individual rights. Yet I was surprised to hear him accuse, judge and condemn—as he has just done—the Director of the Vancouver Regional Office who, I believe, has offered an explanation concerning that situation.

I should like to remind the Hon. Member that the matter of quotas has been explained in the House on several occasions, particularly as it relates to auditing within the Department. I did indicate that instructions had been given to our auditors not to apply such quotas and that the policy had been implemented in regional offices. As to other forms of performance or production objectives for other staff in district offices, I said as well that those performance objectives had to be followed and indeed were being followed, while taking into consideration the nature of various duties and well-known management practices.

[*English*]

JOB DESCRIPTION REFERENCE TO WORK QUOTAS

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, once again the Minister denies the existence of quotas and refers to performance objectives. How can the Minister explain the content of a confidential international memorandum which was in fact issued by his own Department's senior staff and is in effect right across Canada? It is a job description for a collections unit head, and states that one of the functions is to "establish work quotas for each function". How can the Minister continue to deny the existence of quotas when his own Department issues a job description which states that one of the functions of unit heads is to make sure that these very quotas are in fact met?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I would rather not get into an argument with the Hon. Member, but I wish he would keep in mind that it is not the policy of the Department to expect its senior auditors to fill quotas. The Hon. Member is referring to a document dealing with something which has nothing to do with auditing. I am talking about auditing which, by its very nature, leaves no room for such quotas, and the production or performance objectives must be set on the basis of other factors. As to the other sectors, the practices concerning the setting of performance objectives are so designed as to comply with the very nature of the operations carried out by the various sections.

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[*English*]

EMPLOYMENT

EXPENDITURE OF JOB-CREATION FUNDS

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. It relates to this corrupt perversion by the Government and the Cabinet of moneys that should be used for job creation in our country. I want to say to the Minister that it is a matter of morality in Government, and is being perceived as such by the people of Canada. Do not take my word for it; look at the resolution passed by the Liberal Party in full conference, which talked about the manipulative tactics of a small elite of the Liberal Cabinet in Government.

● (1440)

How can the Minister justify this slap-dash, haphazard kind of expenditure of an enormous amount of money with respect to these projects, when in fact a very substantial part of Canada has been ignored concerning the expenditure of moneys under the various programs? How can the Minister justify that in a free and democratic society?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would say to the hon. gentleman, first and most sincerely, that no one on this side of the House has to take lessons in morality from that Hon. Member.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roberts: The second thing I would say to the Hon. Member is that if he were in the House and were listening, he would understand the explanation for the structure which we have established, which is to cut through red tape in bureaucracy and to try to create jobs as quickly as possible through this supplementary program. That is its purpose, and I believe that has been effective.