

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): —as to whether or not there are questions, since, as my colleague has said, the contract is awarded by the Ministry of Supply and Services and the firm was dealing with the Bank of Canada. But, yes, the matter was discussed.

UNTENDERED CONTRACTS—GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Does he believe that there should be guidelines for executive assistants, party presidents, and relations, when they bid for untendered government contracts? Does he really believe that that should be there to protect the public interest?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Supply and Services): Yes, indeed, Mr. Speaker, this Government believes there should be guidelines respecting such things as advertising and the like. And, indeed, there is. This contract was let in complete compliance with the then existing Treasury Board guidelines, Chapter 485, if the Hon. Member wants to check. Since then we have introduced new guidelines to improve the situation, to introduce an element of competition which heretofore did not exist.

Mr. Murphy: When?

Mr. Andre: Those guidelines are now in place and Departments of Government are following those guidelines. We commenced the work immediately upon assuming the responsibilities for the Government of Canada, and upon discovering the mess which the previous administration had left for us.

MEMBERSHIP OF COMPANY'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr. John Nunziata (York South-Weston): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance and it also concerns the Wilson family compact. The shameless Tory pork-barrelling has now become incestuous. A \$234,000 advertising contract is secretly given without tender to members of the Minister of Finance's family and to his riding association president and former employee. Would the Minister confirm, first, that his sister, Wendy Lawson, is on the board of directors of Lawson Murray? And would he confirm as well that he discussed the contract before it was signed with members of Lawson Murray? And if so, why didn't he veto the contract and say no to it?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Order.

Mr. Lapierre: Order.

Oral Questions

Mr. Andre: The contract to which the Hon. Member referred as having been handled in a secret way is right here. He can look at a copy of it any time he wants.

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): We are asking him if he's got a sister on the board.

Mr. Andre: There is nothing secret about it.

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Have you got a sister on the board, too?

Mr. Andre: One does not need to table these things. They are open. We have nothing to hide. The Hon. Member, in implying that there was something improper or illegal, is engaging in his usual muck-raking. He has implied a sort of guilt when the practices we followed were the same as what were left for us, we inherited from the Liberal Party on September 4. The Hon. Member has the assurance of myself that all of the guidelines of the Treasury Board were followed. He can look at the contract, he can look at the letter to see how much value the taxpayers of Canada have received. I am sorry to have to repeat, but perhaps it is necessary for that Hon. Member, that any time we can save the taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars, we are going to do it.

● (1430)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST INQUIRY

Mr. John Nunziata (York South-Weston): Mr. Speaker, that is a lot of bunk. My question was to the Minister of Finance and I would appreciate his standing up and answering the question. Was his sister on the board of directors? Did he have an option, a choice? Could he not have said no? Will he not agree that the awarding of the contract to his sister and brother-in-law was nepotism in its worst form, and a blatant and obvious conflict of interest?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member is saying to me now that my sister is on the board of directors of Lawson Murray, it is the first time I heard about it.

Mr. Nielsen: Character assassination.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): As far as the other questions the Hon. Member has posed are concerned, he should be putting them to the Minister of Supply and Services; it is his contract, not mine. The firm is to deal with the Ministry of Supply and Services, not the Minister of Finance.

CONTENT OF GUIDELINES

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister on the same subject. The Minister of Supply and Services has just told the House that all of the present government guidelines in this situation were