

Oral Questions

Mr. Beatty: —which would cost more than the Government's proposals? Or would they gut the defence program and give the money to social spending?

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): What are you so worried about?

Mr. Beatty: That is why the NDP is the no defence Party of Canada.

Mr. Riis: He may be a little paranoid.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF HEAD OF SWAMINARAYAN HINDU MISSION

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to the attention of Members the presence in the gallery of Pramukh Swami Maharaj, head of the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[Translation]

PUBLIC WORKS

ALLEGATIONS OF CORRUPTION—QUERY WHETHER PRIME MINISTER RECEIVED REPORT FROM ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Last week, the Official Opposition raised the matter of the allegations made by Mr. Kealey with respect to the Member for Joliette. In reply, the Minister of Supply and Services said that he could not comment because the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was investigating the matter. However, on the weekend, the Prime Minister qualified those allegations as being unfounded. My question for the Deputy Prime Minister is this: Did the Prime Minister receive a report from the RCMP on the matter and if not, how could he claim the allegations were unfounded?

[English]

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, the suggestion has been made repeatedly in this House that someone has some information about someone doing something wrong. No one has ventured that opinion outside this Chamber.

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): You have changed your tune.

Mr. McInnes: If indeed the Hon. Member has some information that might assist the Government and the RCMP, would he be good enough to let us have that information? It would be very helpful.

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): You have changed your tune.

STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO PRIME MINISTER

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have news for the Minister. We are beyond that. On June 8 the Minister of Supply and Services said the matter was under investigation and that he could not comment on it. If that was the case, why did the Prime Minister comment on it and say that as far as he was concerned the accusations were without foundation? If there is an inquiry under way, will the Prime Minister withdraw his characterization of these accusations as without foundation, at least until the RCMP finishes the investigation that the Government itself says is under way?

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, one assumption the Prime Minister has made, and I think all Members of this House should do the same, is that everyone is presumed innocent until proven otherwise.

I wish to affirm the fact that the RCMP are seized of this matter. I wish also to let the Hon. Member know that the gentleman, Mr. Kealey, was in my office concerning MICOT a good number of months ago and at no time was there any suggestion of impropriety on behalf of anyone in this Government.

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[Translation]

AIR CANADA

PRIVATIZATION—BILINGUALISM—POSITION OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister and concerns his statement last week that the Government was prepared to consider amendments to its bill that would water down Air Canada's obligation to remain bilingual. This answer reminds me of the "*Gens de l'air*" issue and the national crisis it touched off ten years ago. Will it be possible for French-speaking employees of Air Canada to continue working in French at Air Canada if the Corporation is privatized or will only Air Canada customers be entitled to bilingual service?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, last Friday I was responding to a question posed by the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier who expressed some concerns with respect to this. I said in light of the circumstances, clearly the place for this to be raised would be during the committee's consideration of the Bill, and I think he was quite satisfied with that and I stand by it.