

Senator Fairbairn: Honourable senators, the letter to which the honourable senator refers — that is, the original letter — is a confidential letter that was transmitted in that manner, very carefully, to the Swiss authorities. It remains confidential. Other varieties of correspondence which have found their way into the media are not the document of the Department of Justice.

[Translation]

SALE OF AIRBUS AIRCRAFT TO AIR CANADA—ALLEGED
CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD FEDERAL GOVERNMENT—
DEPARTMENTAL LETTER TO SWISS AUTHORITIES—
SOURCE OF LEAK TO MEDIA

Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin: Honourable senators, yesterday afternoon the Minister of Justice admitted, in connection with this letter, that it was important to find out how the infamous letter had been leaked. Yesterday afternoon, at the very same time or just shortly after, RCMP authorities contacted admitted that they were not aware of any investigation into this famous leak. Could you please enlighten us about this confusion?

[English]

• (1410)

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, we have no idea how an edited version of the letter to the Swiss authorities found its way into the hands of the Canadian media. As I believe I have made clear, Department of Justice officials confirm that the edited document is not a federal government document. The original letter was a confidential letter between the appropriate Canadian and Swiss authorities, as I have already told Senator Forrestall.

With regard to my honourable friend's comments on the RCMP, I will follow up on that matter with my colleagues.

[Translation]

Senator Nolin: The Minister of Justice was very clear: The source of the leak must be found. Canadians are entitled to conclude from the minister's statement that he wants an internal investigation carried out. That statement also sent the media after the RCMP to ask if an investigation was under way. The response is confusing. I think we are entitled to know whether this confusion is going to be cleared up.

[English]

Senator Fairbairn: Honourable senators, I will, of course, do anything I can to clear up any confusion experienced by the honourable senator with regard to this issue.

However, I will state once again that there is no confusion about the fact that the Minister of Justice has confirmed that the

original letter between Canadian and Swiss officials was confidential, and documentation which is out in the media or elsewhere is not Canadian government documentation.

ATLANTIC CANADA OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY

CORNWALLIS PARK DEVELOPMENT AGENCY—ALLEGATIONS OF
MISMANAGEMENT—FINDINGS OF NATIONAL DEFENCE
INVESTIGATION—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau: Honourable senators, my question is a follow-up to a question I raised previously with regard to the removal of assets from DND property in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. The leader may be aware that the Military Police from CFB Greenwood have finally been called in to investigate the suspicious removal of base property.

Given that the Military Police were not doing their jobs when the assets were being removed, what assurances do Canadians have that the findings of the DND investigations will be made public?

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I was not aware of the information which the honourable senator has provided. I will follow up on that matter.

Senator Comeau: Honourable senators, given that the findings may be of incompetence, or worse, will the minister assure the house that the findings of the investigation will be made public?

Senator Fairbairn: I should like to refresh my memory on the details relating to my honourable friend's original question before I give such an assurance.

HUMAN RIGHTS

NIGERIA—EXECUTION OF OGOINI ACTIVISTS—POSSIBLE
RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Consiglio Di Nino: Honourable senators, I should like to associate myself with the comments made by Senator Roux on the tragedy which occurred in Nigeria recently. Could the Leader of the Government in the Senate update us on what action the Government of Canada is taking in dealing with those who are running that country?

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I should like to associate myself with the remarks of Senator Di Nino and Senator Roux, as I am sure all of us in this house would, on the enormous tragedy which occurred in Nigeria. It occurred, in effect, in the face of the Commonwealth, which was meeting at that time.