

*Government Orders*

I say for my children's sake: "Don't do this with a taint, don't do this with an odour, don't have the rope hang up on the rock above. It is easy to make this transparent, and I beg you to do that".

[Translation]

**Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-22 before the House today aims at cancelling the privatization of the Pearson Airport, and the government, by introducing this piece of legislation, wants to fulfil the commitment it made during the election campaign.

This morning, my colleagues reviewed in detail all the process surrounding the negotiations of this privatization deal, and the Reform member who spoke first this morning mentioned that Conservative as well as Liberal lobbyists were involved in this deal since the very beginning.

In his report, ordered by the government, Mr. Nixon concluded that this contract had to be cancelled, and I quote: "My review left me with but one conclusion. To leave in place an inadequate contract arrived at through such a flawed process and under the shadow of possible political manipulation in unacceptable. I recommend that the contract be cancelled". Of course, in such circumstances, the Bloc also agrees that the contract must be cancelled.

● (1055)

But today, we are addressing the issue of political manipulation, the transparency of these contracts and the involvement of lobbyists, people close to the government and the friends of the big political parties.

Let me remind you that the Nixon report, as my colleague mentioned briefly, also made the following recommendation: "Failure to make public the full identity of the participants in this agreement and other salient terms of the contract inevitably raises public suspicion. Where the Government of Canada proposes to privatize a public asset, in my opinion, transparency should be the order of the day". He adds what has already been quoted: "The public should have the right to know the full details of this agreement". That is why the Bloc Québécois is requesting a public inquiry on this matter, on this contract which we never saw.

With this bill, the government wants not only to cancel the privatization of the Pearson Airport, but also to leave it to the minister to settle all of the financial problems related to this agreement. All of these details will be up to the minister. We ask that the amounts and the names be made public and that there be real openness.

We remember that, according to the red book, which the government delights in quoting more and more in this House, the Liberals were probably elected on the promise of wall-to-wall openness. We know quite well that people everywhere in Canada and in Quebec are starting—I dare say—to be fed up with politicians with a tight-lip policy.

If the Liberals were lucky enough to be elected, it was especially on their promise of openness. But what is the reality? When we ask for an inquiry and for the documents on the issue of privatization of Pearson Airport to be tabled, we do not nor will we get anything. The answer is no.

Ever since the beginning of this 35th Parliament, in January, we have been asking the government to open its books to the public and to examine one by one all items of public spending, including tax expenditures. The answer is no. The Prime Minister said recently in the House that if we wanted details on government spending, we only had to ask the committees, since their mandate is to study these expenditures. The Bloc Québécois asked all committees that sit and the answer was no.

In the case of the Hibernia Project, which is now losing billions of dollars, I for one asked the Committee on Natural Resources to let me see the Hibernia original contract. The answer was no.

This afternoon, we will resume debate on a motion by the hon. member for Richelieu regarding the funding of political parties by individuals. When this motion was first moved, we could see right away that members of the Liberal government were against it. Again, they refuse to make things more transparent.

Meanwhile, the situation is very bad in Canada. According to some figures reported last week, there are 790,000 welfare recipients and 400,000 unemployed in Quebec. We heard this morning that the number of unemployed in Canada grew by 65,000 in the month of April, an increase of 1 per cent in some areas. These unemployed people are concentrated in three provinces: Newfoundland, Quebec and British Columbia.

Faced with this situation, the government cannot find anything to say other than it is the unemployed who are the problem, they are a bunch of beer-drinking couch potatoes. That is why things are going bad in Canada. Also, and this is again related to the policy of transparency, when things are going bad, there has to be a reason. If the government cannot be transparent, it has to find a scapegoat. When things are going bad in Canada, we hear that it is because Quebec is too demanding. We all know that since the beginning of the Canadian Confederation, the whole history of this country could be described—

**The Speaker:** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. He still has a fair amount of time left for his speech. When we resume debate around noon, he will have the floor.