

CANADA LANDS COMPANY

REQUEST THAT MINISTER TABLE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works and is about those financial statements. There are lots of disagreements between the Auditor General and the Government about proper accounting and about matters that are reported in financial statements. I would remind the Minister that that does not mean that the Department or agency is not obliged to file its version of the financial statements of its operations. That happens all the time. That is no excuse for not filing or tabling in the House the financial statements of this Crown corporation.

Apart from the disagreement with the Auditor General, where is the Crown corporation's version of its financial statements? Will the Minister undertake to table them now, whether or not the dispute is resolved with the Auditor General?

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, what is involved is the profiling of certain overhead expenses, and there is a meeting of the board of directors on Thursday of this week. My Deputy Minister will be in attendance. There is to be a meeting on Friday of this week with the Auditor General to review the situation and to see if the format proposed is acceptable to the Auditor General.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, if it is not acceptable to the Auditor General, I hope it will be tabled anyway. Lots of the financial statements of this Government are not acceptable to the Auditor General. That is normal.

A matter that concerns Canadians is what makes this Government tick on these questions. When did the concern of the Minister of Public Works about the unfiled financial statements begin? Did it begin when the matter appeared in the newspapers the other day, or did it begin when the corporation failed to file its financial return as it was its statutory duty to do?

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, by way of global response, I think it appropriate that I indicate that the Auditor General indicated that the performance of this Government during the past year was the most optimistic he has had the occasion to comment on in a very long period of time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McInnes: I think it also relevant that the Auditor General be seized of the same information that the corporation wishes to present. There must be a common denominator so that he can properly comment. That is the information we are trying to get and we will get it. I have advised him that he will have it in three days.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SITUATION IN HAITI—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Rosemont): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the two Ministers responsible for this dossier, my question is directed to the appropriate Minister.

Considering the atmosphere of violence that still prevails in Haiti; considering the Haitian people have lost all faith in the National Council and Colonel Namphy, and considering that 30,000 people belong to the Haitian community in Montreal, I would like to know whether the Canadian Government has identified ways of bringing the situation back to normal in a country where violence is still the order of the day.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Hon. Member for her question about this important matter.

We have called back the Canadian ambassador to Haiti. He will arrive in Canada this evening. In the absence of the Minister, I intend to meet with him tomorrow morning for a more detailed report on the events in Haiti.

Through the Minister we have already made known our profound disapproval of the actions and intentions of the Government. After meeting with the ambassador, the Canadian Government will signal very clearly what its intentions are with respect to our bilateral relations and our presence in Haiti.

We profoundly disagree with certain positions taken by the Haitian government and we shall be making a statement very shortly.

Some Hon. Members: Here, here!

CREATION OF COUNCIL *PRO TEMPORE*

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Rosemont): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Right Hon. Prime Minister for his very clear answer which will provide some encouragement to the Haitian community in Montreal.

May I ask the Prime Minister whether he would promote the solution suggested by various groups in Haiti and supported by the Haitian community in Montreal to the effect that a council *pro tempore* be created consisting of the five main opposition leaders, which would reassure the Haitian community in Montreal and the population of Haiti itself?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we noted with interest the suggestion of the Haitian leaders in Montreal about the creation of a council *pro tempore*. It still remains that there is a government presence—and I choose my words carefully—in Port-au-Prince which we must accept for the moment.

However, recent actions and events in Haiti have given rise to serious objections, not only from the Canadian Government,