

Oral Questions

information from the public? Why was this person fired when his information convinced the Government to revise its refugee procedures? How can he be fired for being right?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Employment and Immigration I can tell the Hon. Member that, under the Public Service Staff Relations Act, Mr. Quigley has the right to present a grievance against the Deputy Minister's decision. My understanding is that he is exercising that right. I am advised that a grievance will be heard later this week or early next week. I think in the circumstances it would be inappropriate for me to comment in detail.

EXERCISE OF MINISTERIAL AUTHORITY—REQUEST FOR OFFICER'S REINSTATEMENT

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that Mr. Quigley is but the first victim of an investigative witch-hunt in that Department aimed at intimidating officials and certain members of the media. Will the Deputy Prime Minister not admit that the firing of this individual, who was cited by the Department as being one of the most effective officers in the Toronto branch, was a flagrant abuse of ministerial authority? Will he not do the honourable and moral thing and reinstate Mr. Quigley immediately?

● (1500)

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, without accepting in any way the very serious allegations which the Hon. Member is implying in his question, I will simply repeat that there is a procedure in place. That procedure is very clear. He has exercised his rights under that and it would be inappropriate for me to comment while that procedure is ongoing.

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REVENUE CANADA

WORD PROCESSING WORK

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue. He will be aware of concern expressed, particularly in Winnipeg in the last week or so, about plans which his Department had to contract out confidential word processing work from the tax data centres. Will the Minister confirm subsequent reports that this plan has now been abandoned by the Government? Will he confirm for the House that the Government no longer intends to carry out such a foolish notion?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I can in fact confirm what the Hon. Member has just suggested. In fairness I would point out that this was a

study which was contemplated to improve cost efficiency and service. It did not have implications for either security or job security as many people feared it had.

Mr. Speaker: I will recognize the Hon. member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill for a short supplementary question.

DEPARTMENT'S SECURITY MEASURES

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister and the Department show the same sensitivity for employee concerns with regard to the Department's plans for new security measures wherein they are contemplating widespread fingerprinting, credit checks, et cetera, of employees? Will the Minister undertake not to do anything unless mutual agreement can be reached between the Department and the union involved in this matter?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague realizes that our Department and other government Departments are sensitive to the concerns of their employees. At the same time we must achieve a balance. The Member will remember that there were some concerns expressed recently about the adequacy of security procedures. We will try to strike a fair balance and keep in mind the sensitivities of the employees.

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TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS—CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for International Trade I would like to direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister. As the Minister probably knows, Mr. Clayton Yeutter, the Chief U.S. trade representative, availed himself of a Canadian cultural institution this morning to say once again that he believes that Canadian cultural industries should be on the negotiating table if they have an economic impact.

Is the Government prepared to spend some of the money in its \$12 million slush fund for trade information to buy some stamps and send a letter to Mr. Yeutter explaining that our broadcasters, publishers, and distributors are an essential part of our cultural industries and are not open to negotiation?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I think the Prime Minister made our position on that matter eminently clear in his reply to the House the other day when he said it was very inappropriate for Mr. Yeutter to have made those remarks. We have made our position very clear. I am sorry that the Hon. Member still does not understand it.

Mr. Speaker: I will recognize the Hon. Member for a short supplementary question.