

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

NATIONAL REVENUE

POWERS OF DEPUTY MINISTER

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue who will know that today's press contains reports of growing signs of Liberal back-bench revolt against the lack of ministerial control over the Department of National Revenue. Does the Minister of National Revenue agree with his various colleagues who have spoken to the press in the past two days to indicate that they feel his Deputy Minister has too much power and that the Minister himself does not have adequate control over his own Department?

● (1115)

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I have, on several occasions, discussed with my caucus colleagues any problems they may have had with my Department, and I have also done so with Members of the other Party caucuses in this House.

Nevertheless, I would like to point out to the Hon. Member that it is my responsibility and that of my officials to work together and co-ordinate our efforts in order to provide equitable administration of the Income Tax Act, and that is our objective.

[English]

Mr. Beatty: Mr. Speaker, you will note that the Minister again avoided answering the question of whether or not he agrees with his own colleagues who are attacking his Deputy Minister as having too much power and saying that the Minister does not have enough power.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION DEALING WITH DEPUTY MINISTER'S POWERS

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, two days ago the Minister's colleague, the Hon. Member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, introduced Bill C-220. The whole purpose of that Bill is to strip away the legal authority to give the Deputy Minister powers similar to those of the Minister of National Revenue. Does the Minister support the Bill introduced by his back-bench colleague, which is designed to curtail the powers of his Deputy Minister?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the Bill has been tabled in the House, and as soon debate starts on the Bill, the Hon. Member will have an opportunity to find out the Government's position.

Oral Questions

[English]

Mr. Beatty: Mr. Speaker, you will note that again the Minister has refused to answer a direct question.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, *The Toronto Star* has reported that when the Liberal caucus was in revolt on Wednesday and a succession of Members—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Beatty: —rose to attack the Deputy Minister and to demand his resignation, the Minister sat silently by refusing to take any position one way or the other. I want to know what is the Minister's position. Does he defend his Deputy Minister, or is he prepared to go along with demands from his caucus colleagues that the Deputy Minister be replaced?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member says I am not answering his questions. Actually, in my answer to his first question, I answered the question he put to me just now. My responsibility and that of my officials, including Deputy Ministers, Assistant Deputy Ministers, Directors and Supervisors, is to work together in order to provide for sound and equitable administration of the Income Tax Act. That is our objective.

[English]

TRAINING FILM FOR AUDITORS—OFFER TO SCREEN EDITED VERSION

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the same Minister. Last month an application was made to the Minister's Department by the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West with respect to viewing the training film for auditors called "The Investigative Approach to Auditing". By letter of February 15, signed by Mr. Twolan of his Department, access has been denied to the original film, but an edited version has been prepared for his viewing.

Has the Minister personally viewed this film? Did he personally make the decision to give an edited version of the film to Members, or was it just his departmental officials, as indicated in the letter of February 15?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the answer to this question is short and to the point. The question was: Did I see the film? The answer is: Yes. The second part of the Hon. Member's question was: Did I personally ask to have changes made in the film? Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the Hon. Member read carefully the provisions of the Access to Information Act, which provides under what conditions and circumstances records are to be made available to individuals requesting access. If I am not mistaken, depart-