

Point of Order—Mr. Cossitt

long term savings to manufacturers, distributors, retailers and consumers/taxpayers.

SURVEY OF GEOLOGICAL FORMATION

Question No. 2,994—**Mr. Cossitt:**

1. Did the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources spend public funds on a contract connected with "paleomagnetism of an ordovician ophiolite sequence and the intrusive dike suite" and, if so (a) what are the details, including the name of the person or firm awarded the contract (b) was the amount of the contract \$21,742 and, if not, what was it?

2. What is an explanation of (a) paleomagnetism (b) ordovician (c) ophiolite sequence (d) intrusive dike suite?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services): 1. (a) The contract entitled "Paleomagnetism of an Ordovician Ophiolite Sequence and the Intrusive Dike Suite, New Brunswick" was awarded to Morris Magnetics of Lucan, Ontario. The work consists of the collection of rock samples and measurement of the residual ancient magnetism recorded in these rock types in order to study an aspect relating to the geological formation of the Appalachian mountain chain. It is expected that this investigation would shed light on how the Appalachians were formed and, in turn, the types of mineral and hydrocarbon deposits that could be found in these mountains.

(b) Contract value \$21,742.40.

2. (a) Paleomagnetism—a study of ancient magnetization as recorded in the rocks.

(b) Ordovician—a geological period with age boundaries of 500 to 440 million years before present.

(c) Ophiolite sequence—a type of rock structure of the ordovician age (a critical period when the Appalachians were formed) that has good magnetic signals.

(d) Intrusive dike suite—a type of rock structure of a younger geological age than the ophiolite and characterized by its wall like appearance across the earth's strata.

IMPACT OF 1981 CUPW STRIKE

Question No. 3,025—**Mr. Cossitt:**

Did the government prepare studies of the impact on the economy of the 1981 strike by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and, if so, what were the results of the studies?

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of State (Finance)): I am unaware of any studies prepared by the government yielding precise quantitative estimates of the impact of the 1981 postal strike on the economy. This, however, does not mean that the government was not aware of the various possible impacts of the postal strike on the one hand, and the cost of a speedy settlement under CUPW's initial bargaining position on the other.

The strike did generate losses for some sectors of the economy. However, a speedy settlement on CUPW's terms could have had a serious inflationary impact on the economy. The government sought an appropriate balance in this difficult

situation. The process of negotiations between the government and the CUPW culminated in a successful resolution of the dispute which was fair to all parties concerned.

[English]

Mr. Smith: I ask, Madam Speaker, that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Speaker: Shall the remaining questions stand?

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POINT OF ORDER

MR. COSSITT—REQUEST FOR REINSTATEMENT OF ORDER PAPER QUESTION

Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds-Grenville): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order to request clarification from the Chair. Approximately two years ago—and I could obtain the reference from *Hansard* as I have it in my office—Mr. Speaker Jerome ruled in regard to a question of mine that it be put back on the Order Paper as a result of the fact that the government had acted as Speaker of the House of Commons rather than as the government and quoted from Beauchesne in support of why it would not answer the question.

This happened again yesterday in connection with question No. 3,236 on the Order Paper which the government answered. Again the government stated that, in its opinion, Beauchesne prohibited my question. I contend it is not the government's prerogative to do that; it would be the prerogative of the Chair to rule my question out of order. I think the question should go back on the Order Paper until the Chair does rule it out of order.

The government went further, however, and said that even if the officers of the Table ignore these rules and allow the question, it will not answer it. I contend, Madam Speaker, that in effect the Table is the Speaker and that we are now in a position where we have the government criticizing the Speaker of the House of Commons. This is not permitted under our rules. The government has said, in effect, that even if the Speaker of the House of Commons and her officers are derelict in their duty, it does not care and will do what it wants anyway.

I think this is highly out of order. I would request in accordance with Speaker Jerome's ruling, if Your Honour agrees with it, that question No. 3,236 be put back on the Order Paper. It is the privilege of the government not to answer if it does not wish to, and I know that; but it is not its privilege to present a ruling from Beauchesne, as it has done a number of times in this session. It is certainly not the government's privilege to criticize the Table and the Speaker of the House. That is out of order under the rules of the House.

I therefore ask that the question be put back on the Order Paper and that the government be held in contempt and forced to withdraw its criticism of the Chair.