

Oral Questions

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mazankowski: What arrogance.

Mr. Broadbent: I remind the Conservatives that there was incompetence in the RCMP in the past, and they know it very well. I wish to ask the Minister—

Mr. Siddon: Are you questioning the Commissioner's—

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): Did you never hear of the McDonald report?

Mr. Broadbent: Read the McDonald report some time.

Mr. Hees: You would have never said those things!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member will put his question.

Mr. Broadbent: In view of the seriousness of the allegations, does the Minister think it appropriate to request the Commissioner of the RCMP to bring to his attention the evidence that Mr. Besso stated is available?

Mr. Hees: That is what he said.

Mr. Broadbent: No, he did not.

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, of course it is a serious allegation. I am not suggesting for a moment it is not. Perhaps the Hon. Member is not, but I am very concerned about the integrity of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and their reputation.

Mr. Riis: Why the cover-up?

Mr. Kelleher: That is why, immediately, I went to the Commissioner, bright and early this morning—

Mr. Broadbent: You are so thick.

Mr. Kelleher: This is why he has spoken—

Mr. Mazankowski: You don't trust the RCMP?

Mr. Kelleher: —to his officers. They have fully reviewed the file in question, and they have come back, and I told you that the statement that was made in 1985 was true then, and it is still true now as a result of their reinvestigation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: Get Bob White to investigate.

Mr. Broadbent: He will do it about 10 times as fast.

Mr. Mazankowski: Self-appointed guardian of the RCMP? You have come a long way.

INDIAN AFFAIRS

CONSULTANTS' REPORT ON MANAGEMENT OF MANITOBA REGION

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs.

The Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group has now confirmed in its report that indeed there was serious mismanagement in the Manitoba region of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

We wish to know from the Minister how he intends to clean up this disgraceful mess in Manitoba. When will the Minister show some interest in his job and meet with the bands in Manitoba and work with them to develop a financial regime that is more appropriate to the goals of self-government?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I am a bit disappointed. I thought a Member with his concern and time in the House would have read the report.

Mr. Penner: I read it in detail.

Mr. McKnight: A Member with the time and concern that the Hon. Member has would have read the report and the allegations that were made. I as Minister asked the Office of the Comptroller General to investigate those allegations, and I as Minister asked the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to investigate accusations of criminal activity. The report that has been put forward does not, as the Hon. Member states, talk about gross negligence within the region.

Mr. Penner: Serious mismanagement.

Mr. McKnight: I have received the report. I will be working with the Office of the Comptroller General on those recommendations. Hopefully, by working together we will be able to rectify any and all financial problems that may be associated with the Department, and Indian bands and tribal councils in Manitoba.

Mr. de Corneille: Your time has come.

DEPARTMENT'S SERVICE TO INDIAN PEOPLE

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): The Minister knows that the phrase I used was "serious mismanagement". The Minister ought to know by now that both he and his Department are more part of the problem than they are the solution.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Penner: I wish to quote from *Hansard* what his predecessor stated in June, 1986, when he was talking about departmental mismanagement, "—it is a matter that obviously needs to be investigated in all regions of the country—"