

Oral Questions

propose to take to educate Americans, senators especially, on the official bilingualism of Canada?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think I have answered this question a couple of times in the House today. There is no longer any need to prove Canada's bilingualism, it is a historic and vital reality of our national life. It has never been questioned by anybody, nor will it ever be. Will all Americans acknowledge, accept and understand this fact at all times? It will be their problem, their dilemma, but this will not affect our situation or our national will.

● (1440)

[English]

REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER SENT CLEAR MESSAGE TO UNITED STATES

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Will the Prime Minister send a very clear message to the United States that we do not want our languages in the melting pot, nor do we want our culture in the blender with theirs?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for her concern, which I appreciate.

The views of the Government of Canada, and the Parliament of Canada, surely could not have been stated with any greater clarity. There is no question as to what the Government of Canada and the Parliament of Canada have sought to achieve in matters of bilingualism and linguistic rights.

I do not know whether the Hon. Member expects me or the Government of Canada to be able to persuade all members of Congress, at all times, as to certain realities. These realities do exist, and all I can do is to tell the House that we have been vigilant at all times, as Parliament would want; that we have been unrelenting in our pursuit of these realities; and that we shall conduct ourselves at all times in a manner that the Hon. Member would be very proud of.

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[Translation]

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO METHOD OF AWARDING CONTRACTS

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister and concerns the contracts for Government advertising that were mentioned in a number of reports today.

It is reported that Mr. Jean Pélouquin, in his capacity as Co-chairman of the Government's Advertising Management Group, awarded advertising contracts to his own company, Les productions Indigo, for a total of \$300,000, in addition to giving reference mostly to a number of businesses and advertising agencies that support the Conservative Party.

What I want to ask the Prime Minister is: Will he make the right decision this time and ask for a public inquiry into the way this Government awards advertising contracts?

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Hon. Member that as soon as the allegations were made, as the Minister responsible for Supply and Services I asked my department to investigate.

REQUEST THAT PUBLIC INQUIRY BE CONDUCTED

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, the Minister's reply is not exactly a surprise. By noon we knew she had asked for an internal investigation.

However, what we want is not a cover-up, not Jean Pélouquin investigating Jean Pélouquin, but a public inquiry. Not what happened in the Bissonnette case. In fact, 61 per cent of the population thinks the Government should have asked for a public inquiry.

Will the Government do what has to be done, not sweep the dust under the rug but hold a public inquiry?

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, the Advertising Management Group is a group that has done excellent work.

We have established a competition system. We are dismantling a patronage system. We have reduced advertising expenditures. We have rationalized this activity sector in the Government, and above all, we cut the propaganda program that was in place during the last 10 years of the previous Government.

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[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF MRS. CORETTA KING

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the Gallery of Mrs. Coretta King, the widow of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!