

## Oral Questions

[English]

## GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster):** Mr. Speaker, week after week we in the opposition have shown examples of Liberal patronage appointments.

The recent appointment of Michel Robert as the new Oka negotiator is a perfect example of the Liberal do as I say, not as I do policy.

Who can forget the howls of outrage and indignation when the former government appointed Bernard Roy, a former Tory aide, as Oka negotiator, yet the Liberals have done exactly the same thing.

My question is for the government House leader, whose government has made a big deal about its ethics counsellor, yet it has proven that it does not have the basic integrity required to live up to its rhetoric. Does the government expect a new ethics counsellor to be its moral conscience or to clean up the awful mess of patronage it is creating?

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister makes an announcement of his proposal on the commitment to have an ethics counsellor it will be open to the opposition parties to comment. In the meantime I would ask them to wait until the Prime Minister formally puts his proposal to the House and the public.

I think that would be the only fair and reasonable way to do it.

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster):** Mr. Speaker, that was not the question. I was talking about restoring faith and integrity in Parliament itself.

Time after time we have seen appointments to big L Liberals for advertising contracts, for committee contracts. The list goes on.

How can the government House leader stand up and say these appointments of well known Liberals are not patronage appointments and will he stop them?

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, we made a commitment to appoint people on the basis of merit and on the basis of competence. The hon. member's suggestion that there are not any competent people in a particular political party flies in the face of common sense.

The government is committed to making appointments on the basis of merit and competence. Since close to 51 per cent of Canadians support the Liberal Party, I do not think that half the Canadian population should be excluded from consideration for appointments.

• (1430)

[Translation]

## DOUBLE HULLED SHIPS

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne):** Mr. Speaker, last Monday, in answer to a question from the opposition about double hulled ships, the Deputy Prime Minister stated, and I quote: "The double hull legislation was passed last year. I do not know where the Bloc member and his colleagues were at that time, but the legislation already exists".

In fact, the legal counsels of the transport department we talked to confirmed that there is no such legislation in force. Let me remind the House that Bill C-121, an Act to amend the Canada Shipping Act, passed in 1993, does not require ships to have a double hull.

My question is for the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment. To avoid any further misunderstanding, can the minister tell us exactly what piece of legislation on double hulled ships she was referring to?

[English]

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, the Canada Shipping Act which was passed in 1993 requires all new ships plying the waters in Canada to have double hulls.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne):** Mr. Speaker, how can the Minister of the Environment claim to be able to face any potential environment crisis in our waters, when she does not even know that there is no legislation concerning the transportation of dangerous goods in double hulled ships?

[English]

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, the member asked if there was legislation on double hulling. Indeed there is legislation on double hulling. It was passed last year. It applies to new ships.

The reality is that we also have double hulling applying to ships that are carrying oil cargo.

In respect of other ships, which I assume is the member's intention, if he is suggesting that all ships be double hulled in order to ply Canadian waters in any part of the country I would suggest that his own proposition would see the port of Quebec closed down today if he had his way.

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## PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.