

*Oral Questions*

receive change orders or additional payments without public tender.

The answer is that the CAIM group of consultants has no such discretionary authority. Under the terms of the contract with the Department of Transport CAIM is to assist in the preparation of tender packages and to assist in the assessment of subsequent tenders, but I wish to make clear that it is the Department of Transport that has the responsibility for calling the tenders, reviewing the tenders received, and awarding the subsequent contracts. CAIM may, of course, recommend change orders to the general manager of the Mirabel project but that is as far as their role goes.

There is another question to answer, Mr. Speaker, if I may have the indulgence of the House.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Chrétien:** The opposition do not want to know the truth, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Again this raises the very difficult problem we face. On occasion it is necessary for ministers to indicate that they will secure information and give an answer at a later date. There was a moment or two before 12.15 when this question period was due to expire, and I gave that time to the minister in order for him to answer the question.

This raises two difficulties. First, the answer is longer than would be permitted in the question period; secondly, the hon. member who put the question is not in the House, and there is no time for supplementaries. There does not appear to be any sensible solution to this problem.

**An hon. Member:** It should be done on motions.

**Mr. Speaker:** If every time the answer to a question is deferred there is going to be a statement on motions, we would have one every day. There is no simple answer to this, but obviously at this moment I cannot let the minister continue.

**Mr. Chrétien:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I must tell you that half of what I read was repetition of the question. The question was so long that I had to give an indication of what I want to reply to. But if they do not want to hear the truth, they should stop making smears in the House.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Mr. Speaker, the minister indicates his bona fides by making a smear now on our colleague, the hon. member for Central Nova, when he is not in the House. This only underlines the difficulty that you face, Mr. Speaker. With all deference, I suggest that the proper thing for the minister to do is not only to wait until the hon. member for Central Nova is present in the House, and have the courage to face the member who posed the question to him—

**Mr. Paproski:** They are afraid.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** . . . but it is also incumbent upon the minister to take the opportunity on motions.

[Mr. Chrétien.]

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Once again it is evident that there is no satisfactory solution to this recurring problem; that has been amply demonstrated.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

## PRIVILEGE

MR. BAKER (GRENVILLE-CARLETON)—REFERENCE TO REMARKS OF MR. AUGUSTE CHOQUETTE

**Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, during the interval that has just been broken by this "friendly" exchange there have been discussions among representatives of the parties respecting the form the motion should take. I think I should say at the outset that all of us are extremely grateful for the assistance of the parliamentary counsel and the officers at the table with respect to this matter.

We considered the possibility of expanding the motion in a detailed way, but it was decided that perhaps that ought not to be done, that the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections had sufficient powers and that if they required any additional powers in order satisfactorily to deal with the matter, they could return to the House. I am satisfied the temper and mood of the House in respect of this matter is such that those powers would be given willingly.

If Your Honour finds this motion acceptable, the chairman of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, the hon. member for Lachine-Lakeshore (Mr. Blaker), has in a preliminary way moved with the greatest speed and I am sure all hon. members are grateful to him for the speed and interest he has shown in this matter.

The upshot of our discussions is that I would suggest to Your Honour a motion which, if it could be, would be seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) but which, for our purposes, will in fact be seconded by the hon. member for Nipissing (Mr. Blais). I would move:

That the alleged accusation by Mr. Auguste Choquette that a substantial number of the members of the House of Commons have been in receipt of bribes be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

I hope you will find that motion acceptable, sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Again I stress that the principal question that the Chair has to decide is whether or not the proceedings of the House ought to be interrupted in order to put such a motion. I have no hesitation in making a decision in the affirmative. It is, therefore, moved by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker), seconded by the hon. member for Nipissing (Mr. Blais):

That the alleged accusation by Mr. Auguste Choquette that a substantial number of the members of the House of Commons have been in receipt of bribes be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.