

*Oral Questions*

ing is serious and we believe that they will use every possible effort to see that is achieved.

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**MONTREAL PORT CORPORATION**

**Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

The Montreal Port Corporation, a federal crown corporation and its general manager, Dominic Taddeo, seem to be on a virtual shopping spree with Canadian taxpayers' dollars.

I have a copy of an invoice for \$1,725 billed to Mr. Taddeo at the Port of Montreal for Montreal Canadiens season hockey tickets, an invoice also showing the Port of Montreal entertained ten people at a gala at a staggering \$500 apiece. The Port of Montreal was also billed for \$4,428 for Expos season tickets.

Can the minister confirm that the Port of Montreal actually paid these bills and, if so, does he think this is a good use of taxpayers' money?

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport):** Madam Speaker, I will take my hon. friend's concerns under advisement. I must admit that I try to brief myself for Question Period, but no minister's briefing includes going through all the invoices of every crown corporation or every local port authority. We just cannot do that. We try to come here and answer questions. There is another forum for my hon. friend's questions. Obviously, if she wants those answers, she could put the question on the Order Paper.

In the alternative, I come here to try to answer the questions I can answer, and I will certainly look into my hon. friend's concerns.

**Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Madam Speaker, the Montreal Port Corporation has been purchasing land as well near Contrecoeur using federal Tory fundraiser Maurice Mayer as its agent. Mr. Mayer, it seems, was in line to make a very good commission. I have one invoice of August last year showing he had billed \$186,637 for his services.

Can the minister tell us how much money in total Mr. Mayer made on this transaction and why was not the port itself or Public Works handling this transaction, as they are able to do?

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport):** Madam Speaker, obviously within the ordinary course of business the Port of Montreal purchases land. That comes as no surprise to any member of this House nor any member of the public.

What I really want to ask my friend is whether she has evidence of any impropriety in any of the transactions that she talks about, or is this just another allegation floated out there in an effort to smear innocent people?

**Ms. McLaughlin:** Madam Speaker, the minister knows full well that it is the duty of this House to ensure that taxpayers' dollars are accounted for and spent well on behalf of the taxpayers.

*[Translation]*

Since there are many ethical questions about the land purchases in Contrecoeur and the excessive spending of members of the board of the Port of Montreal, will the minister order an inquiry?

*[English]*

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport):** Madam Speaker, since we have a question on the floor of the House, since I have suggested that I will look into my hon. friend's concerns, obviously I will look into them. We do not go running off calling for inquiries until we make some investigations and ask ourselves if there is an answer to my hon. friend's allegation. If you want a smear campaign, I will not give it to you that easy.

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**TRADE**

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre):** Madam Speaker, I would like to raise a question with the Deputy Prime Minister concerning the trade figures in a release by Statistics Canada today.

The Deputy Prime Minister would recognize that once again we have experienced a substantial decline of over \$1 billion in our trade figures. Perhaps more dramatically, we have a \$750 million decline in our trade with the United States. I would remind him that in 1984 we had a \$20 billion surplus in trade with the United States.

• (1330)

How can the government continue to support the continuing high interest policy, high dollar policy, and a trade agreement which is leading to the erosion and