

that respect is that all means to establish facilities for the linguistic minority must be taken in keeping with the interpretation of that section of our Constitution.

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● (1450)

[English]

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

ADVICE GIVEN TO MINISTER OF NATIONAL REVENUE BY OFFICIALS

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. The Deputy Prime Minister will know as a result of the furore concerning criticisms of the Tax Department that the Prime Minister's Office has established a small group of individuals designed to advise the Minister of National Revenue with respect to the criticism that has been levied at his Department.

Mr. Tom Axworthy, the principal secretary, says that the Prime Minister's Office is designed for partisan purposes. In light of the tactics of investigation, and in light of the attempted smear and the muck raking with respect to the Leader of the Opposition, how can any Members of this House repose confidence in the fact that we will be immune from criticism with respect to criticism of the Revenue Department when the Prime Minister's Office is constantly investigating the Leader of the Opposition and other Members of this House?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the question is purely rhetorical. The Hon. Member does not ask anything. He makes a number of charges with which I have dealt already. There is no investigation whatsoever into the personal lives of Members of Parliament. The Hon. Member repeats the claim again. Why? There is no such effort. Is the Hon. Member surprised that the Prime Minister's Office is interested in the politics of Canada?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. MacEachen: It is, and will continue to be. I am sure if that never-never land happens and we have a Tory Government again, the Prime Minister of that Government would be interested in the politics of Canada and would be very interested in what the Leader of the Opposition would be doing in that very, very distant time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speyer: Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister represents the Party of St. Laurent and Laurier. I am sure they would be disgusted at the tactics that are being utilized.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE DEPARTMENT NOT MONITORING TAX RETURNS OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue. Will he confirm the accuracy of my statement that he is being advised by a group of individuals with respect to the Revenue Canada crisis, the Revenue Canada furore, from the Prime Minister's Office? In addition to that, can he give assurances to every Member of this House that the Leader of the Opposition's tax returns have not been monitored, or any other Members' tax returns? Will he give us that ironclad assurance?

Mr. MacEachen: That has been asked and answered already.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): In answer to the first part of the question of the Hon. Member, Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate that, with the assistance of the Privy Council, where can be found the most senior officials who assume responsibility for the Public Service within the Government, we have appointed a working group to look after and improve Revenue Canada communications with the public. I hope the Hon. Member will understand that they belong to the Privy Council and are all senior Government officials. I should like to assure him as well that, whatever the political partisanship criteria may be, they are never a determining factor as to whether a taxpayer return will be audited or not.

[English]

JOB DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Hon. Allan Lawrence (Durham-Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, bearing in mind the statutory responsibility of the Minister of Justice is to ensure that the laws of Canada are enforced, has the Minister assured himself, or will he, that no offence has been committed by Mr. Tom Axworthy, the principal secretary to the Prime Minister, or anyone else connected with the Prime Minister's Office, in dishonestly or fraudulently committing a deception in the falsification of documents under Section 355 of the Criminal Code, or for that matter under Section 356 relating to the falsification of employment records, in that Mr. Pierre Cadieux was allegedly employed by the Prime Minister's Office and apparently Mr. Axworthy by utilizing a false job description and classification?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member's question is full of allegations and insinuations. It seems to me that if he wants to make that kind of allegation, he should do so plainly and directly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!