

## Oral Questions

Hon. Member might be of more value to the country in addressing those issues. I suggest he heed his own advice.

● (1430)

## REQUEST FOR PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I will not only do my best to stay within your parameters but also within the criteria that I set for myself. Nothing is more important in this House, and the Deputy Prime Minister knows it, than political responsibility and the accountability of Ministers.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Let us deal with some further facts. We are told that the Department of National Defence valued the radar base at \$4.5 million but it was sold for \$187,500.

**Mr. Beatty:** Who told you that?

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Over 700 acres in the Prime Minister's riding—that is a fact—

**Mr. Beatty:** Who told you that?

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** —93 homes on that property—that is a fact—were sold by the federal Government for a total of \$187,500.

We are also told, and the Hon. Member for Shefford (Mr. Lapierre) has produced the assessment list, that the municipal property taxes on that land this year were \$113,000.

**Mr. Fennell:** It is a radar station.

**An Hon. Member:** A year?

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** A year, for which the Minister's own Department sent an interim cheque for \$53,000. The property is assessed by the Town of Moisie at over \$6 million. Those happen to be facts.

Wouldn't the Deputy Prime Minister feel in the circumstances that the Prime Minister ought to authorize a parliamentary inquiry relating to political responsibility here to ensure that the property sold in the Prime Minister's riding, owned by the federal Government, was sold at an unbelievably low price against all the available facts?

**Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, I ask the Right Hon. Member how much he would pay for one slightly used radar base? The proof of the pudding is that 19 firms, people knowledgeable in that particular area, people knowledgeable in real estate, people knowledgeable about the future, made bids. Seventeen of them were under \$12,000, one was \$50,000 and one was \$100,000. Isn't that the fairest indication of the value of this property, Mr. Speaker?

[Translation]

## REQUEST FOR PUBLIC PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, in the July 12 issue *Le Nord-Est*, a newspaper published in the Prime Minister's riding, reports that Mayor Bernard Saint-Laurent has denounced the politicization of this case and the newspaper refers to political interference in the sale of this property. What did the Prime Minister do when he read this paper, a paper published in his own riding?

On August 5 the Minister of Public Works got a letter from one of his senior Quebec officials claiming there had been interference. What did the Minister do before the weekend? Absolutely nothing! Will the Prime Minister give Canadians a public parliamentary inquiry to uncover the real objectives and reasons why the property was sold at such a ridiculously low price?

[English]

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Works has tried to answer the questions—

**Some Hon. Members:** He never did.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** —within the limitations that are placed upon him as a result of the RCMP review.

**Mr. Cassidy:** Not true.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** The Hon. Member talks about facts and then he quotes from a newspaper. I am not sure whether he can substantiate them but if he wants to quote from a newspaper, maybe we should quote *The Montreal Gazette* for September 24, from an article by Bill Johnson which really puts this whole thing in perspective.

Referring to the Liberal Party, he wrote:

The Commons way is to smear, to rush to judgment, to condemn before hearing, to demand instant answers to complex questions and to shout "coverup" if the answers are not instantly supplied—as they cannot be.

There is no concern for people's reputations, no respect for the presumption of innocence until guilt is established, no sensitivity to fairness in the manner of raising questions and in allowing people properly to defend themselves.

Where is the fairness in this institution, Mr. Speaker?

## FORWARDING OF LETTER BY MINISTER TO RCMP

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby):** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Minister is quite right. What we are concerned about here are facts.

I want to ask the Minister of Public Works to answer a specific question with respect to the facts surrounding this case. How long did it take him to pass on the letter that he received from Hugh Hylands to the RCMP? How much time elapsed between the time he received that letter and the time that he passed it on to the RCMP?