

Oral Questions

Ms. McLaughlin: What about last year, the year before and the year before that?

Mr. Mazankowski: She asks what about last year. Included in here is our commitment and our follow through in negotiating an agreement in principle with the Dene-Métis on their comprehensive land claims, as well as with the Yukon Indians and the Nishga Tribal Council, comprehensive land claims with the Council of Yukon Indians, and negotiations that led to agreements in principle with the Inuit of the Northwest Territories on their comprehensive land claim.

There has not been this kind of progress made in the last 50 years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: The efforts of the Prime Minister and this government in terms of moving toward self-government saw many First Ministers' Conferences held. Without Quebec sitting at the table, it was very difficult to proceed. That commitment is restated again in this correspondence to Chief Fontaine.

I am sure that when the hon. leader of the New Democratic Party reads the letter she will agree that there has been tremendous progress made. There is progress being made today, and there is that commitment for the future.

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MONTREAL PORT CORPORATION

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. It concerns the administration of the port of Montreal.

Now that the government has had the weekend to look into the issue raised in the House on Friday, can the minister tell us by what strange, happy coincidence a Tory fund raiser and friend of the Prime Minister, Mr. Maurice Mayer, got the untendered contract for \$225,000 to purchase properties for the port authority?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am advised that port of Montreal expansion has been talked about for several years, that the board of directors narrowed it down to 11 sites, decided upon one and then decided to hire one agent to do the land

assembly. My hon. friend will realize that you do not do land assemblies on the front page of the newspaper. You hire one person who is competent in the field to negotiate. Maurice Mayer was that one person competent to do it. He did it to the satisfaction of the board of directors which appointed him.

I would point out to my hon. friend that all transactions were within the range of the estimates of the Department of Public Works and that all Treasury Board guidelines were followed.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, what are friends for?

[*Translation*]

I have a supplementary for the Minister of Transport. Could the minister or his colleague, the Minister of Public Works, tell the House why Public Works employees were unable to do the work themselves? And is the government prepared to ask the Auditor General of Canada to investigate this matter?

[*English*]

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will let my hon. friend in on a secret about assembling land. If you are a big owner you do not go out to try to do the purchasing. Anybody who has something to sell knows they are going to boost the price.

My hon. friend should check with some of his relatives. They know how to assemble land a lot better than he does—and she could tell him how to do it.

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BILL C-69

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Finance I will address my question to the Minister of Justice.

The Minister of Finance and the Minister of Justice will have heard of the decision of the Court of Appeal of British Columbia which ruled that the Government of Canada has no authority for capping its obligations under the Canada Assistance Plan Act as proposed in Bill C-69.

Will the government now do the honourable thing and withdraw this bill from consideration in the other place?