

Oral Questions

In view of this type of politically-charged atmosphere in which these incidents are happening, will the Minister not do the right thing and call for a full public inquiry concerning the Pélouquin affair?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, I intend to act on the advice I received from my legal adviser, and an audit will be made by the security committee within the Department.

Mr. Speaker, I may add that I think it is pretty scandalous I should be asked such questions this morning, especially by a Member who belongs to a party that shared this patronage concept when it awarded all its advertising contracts on the basis of a phone call to their friends.

[English]

EMPLOYMENT OF MR. PÉLOQUIN

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, the Minister says that she is scandalized. With the way her Government is performing, she should be scandalized.

Yesterday the Minister said in the House: "That contract ended on March 31st . . . Mr. Pélouquin no longer works in my" office.

In view of the fact that as late as Wednesday of this week members of her staff in her Department were still answering phone calls claiming that Mr. Pélouquin was only out for the day or out momentarily, why are they still answering as if this person were still working there? Is he or is he not working there? If he is not working there, is he a volunteer? What is he doing in that office?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Pélouquin ceased to work for my Department on March 31 this year. He is no longer working with our advertising group.

We have put in place an effective system and effective working methods, and I want the House to know that as the Minister responsible for this system, I will never let anyone tarnish its success, be they Liberals, Conservatives or members of the NDP.

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[English]

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES CANADA

CONSTRUCTION OF PRISON IN PORT-CARTIER—CANCELLATION OF OTHER CAPITAL PROJECTS

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, my question concerns the Prime Minister's misguided exercise in pork-barrel politics, that is, his \$68 million prison in his own

riding. We now know how the Prime Minister intends to pay for the prison in Port-Cartier.

According to information I received yesterday from Correctional Services Canada the Government has cancelled 25 much needed capital projects in the correctional services. Ten of these projects were scheduled for western Canada. Is it any wonder that the Hon. Member for Edmonton—Strathcona and westerners generally are as mad as hell at the Government? I would now like to put my question to the Government.

How can it explain the cancellation of these 25 capital projects? Will the Government not admit that the Prime Minister's prison in Port-Cartier is being built at the expense of jobs and correctional facilities in western Canada?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I find it quite amazing—

Mr. St. Germain: Sickening!

Mr. Hnatyshyn:—my colleague says "sickening"—that members of the Liberal Party are so much against making progress on the North Shore of Quebec—

Mr. Riis: At the expense of western Canada.

Mr. Hnatyshyn:—that they would constantly criticize this excellent facility that will be built for the benefit of people in that region in terms of economic development. There is no linkage at all with respect to the program going on in the Solicitor General's Department. The basis on which the Hon. Member puts his question is erroneous, false, mischievous, and quite out of order.

● (1125)

Mr. Speaker: I know Hon. Members would want me to comment first that it is for the Chair to decide what is out of order.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I think Hon. Members would also want me to remind the House that the Hon. Member had a very lengthy preamble. I am conscious of the fact that the Hon. Member for York South—Weston is the second lead questioner for the Official Opposition, but I would expect the Hon. Member to make his preamble and question short.

Mr. Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, as a western Canadian the Justice Minister ought to hang his head in shame for not standing up and fighting for western Canada.

CANCELLATION OF EXPANSION OF EDMONTON INSTITUTION

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Government to explain why a \$50 million capital project in Edmonton, the expansion of the Edmonton institution, was cancelled. Can the Minister explain why this much needed expansion in western Canada which would have