

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps while the right hon. gentleman is here he could answer the question.

• (1450)

Mr. Mulroney: Well all right, Mr. Speaker, if you insist. I thank my hon. friend for the question. I have not yet had a chance to consider this matter with my colleagues. I will do so and be happy to respond as soon as I can.

Miss Grey: Mr. Speaker, I know that there has been some time to address this issue since October 16 and I know that the fax machines were busy between here and Singapore after that was over. It is not a matter of when, but it is a matter of why not reform the Senate. I think that we in Alberta are getting restless for this to happen.

The time has come for Senate reform. I heard from a Senator at our weekend convention in Edmonton that the Senate sleeps 104. When will this change be made in the Senate of Canada?

Am Hon. Member: Sleeps?

Miss Grey: That's what a Liberal Senator said at our convention.

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, did I hear my hon. friend say that a Liberal Senator was attending the Reform convention on the weekend? It would be interesting to know if this is the new position of the Liberal party. Given some of those principles adopted there I would expect the Leader of the Opposition to call in that Senator and start putting his feet to the fire right now, because I plan to do it at an appropriate time.

With regard to my hon. friend, I have already answered the question and as soon as I can consult with my colleagues I will be happy to give her an appropriate response.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister and it concerns the continuing Oerlikon saga. We have now learned that following both an RCMP investigation and an internal audit of National Defence that four top officials of National Defence assigned to the Oerlikon's low level air defence project have now been either forced to retire or fired.

I want to ask the Prime Minister what is the link between the investigation, the audit, and the firings in question?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the question that the hon. member asks is a question that has been addressed by the Department of National Defence. There were two internal audits done. There were investigations done by the RCMP. There was not a recommendation by the RCMP to have criminal charges laid. The appropriate investigation has been undertaken and the appropriate action has been taken. There were no allegations and no evidence of anything other than management—

Mr. Kaplan: What is going on?

Mr. McKnight: The hon. members ask what is going on. There was an audit and there was an investigation. There were irregularities in the management practices of that office. In some instances individuals whose terms had expired were not rehired. The action that was taken was appropriate and if the hon. member wishes additional information he should ask someone else.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I did ask someone else. I asked the Prime Minister. Perhaps he would answer the question the next time.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is as follows and concerns the Oerlikon affair. The four people in charge of the Oerlikon project have been fired by the Tory Government opposite.

I would like the Prime Minister to give us a reasonable explanation instead of the ridiculous answers we have just heard.

Why were these four people fired? If nothing was wrong at Oerlikon, why fire them?

[*English*]

Mr. McKnight: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has reached a conclusion that is not logical, but that is not surprising. He suggests that there is a relationship between actions taken by the management of the Department of National Defence to have efficiencies and management practices that are appropriate for not only the program management office but other departments of government.