

REASONS FOR CORPORATION'S DECISION

Mr. Doug Anguish (The Battlefords-Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, Eldorado Nuclear is involved in the nuclear industry. Eldorado Resources Limited is the same Crown corporation as is Eldor Resources. We have been allowed into Key Lake through that mining consortium. Why are we not allowed by that Crown corporation—and I direct my question to the Minister responsible—access to that mine because we are New Democrats?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I understand the Hon. Member's concern and I repeat it is not the Government's practice to reject requests from groups of members who wish to visit facilities, and I think Eldorado Nuclear should take steps to accommodate members of the NDP caucus and members of the other caucuses as well when they wish to visit facilities.

* * *

● (1430)

[English]

NATIONAL REVENUE

EXISTENCE OF TAX COLLECTION QUOTA SYSTEM IN WINNIPEG OFFICE

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of National Revenue. An employee who has worked in the Winnipeg office of Revenue Canada has stated, and I quote directly from an article that appeared in the *Winnipeg Free Press* as follows:

"I knew how many accounts I had to collect—call them quotas or whatever you like. I was expected to collect five accounts a week at a minimum of \$10,000 per account," Darryl Cruickshank said in a telephone interview yesterday.

Why did the Minister persist in saying in the House that quotas were only in place in the Kitchener office when in fact they were in place in Revenue Canada's Winnipeg office? Will he confirm to today that in fact quotas were in place in Revenue Canada's Winnipeg office?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry the Hon. Member did not follow the debate that has been taking place here in the House for several weeks, or perhaps he has not been properly informed by his colleagues. I have had occasion to explain to the House, when referring to a very specific set of duties within the Department, namely, the duties of an auditor, that it was not the policy of the Department to set assessment quotas for each auditor. Auditing accounts is a very specific function, and once that operation is finished, the result is an assessment, which is reviewed and then issued by another division, the Assessment Division.

Oral Questions

The Hon. Member skipped the Assessment Division and went directly from auditing to collection, in other words, the group that is responsible for collecting monies owing to the Government and, in the final instance, owing to Canadian taxpayers. I think it is ironic to see a Member of a Party that has always said without the slightest compunction that there are too many public servants for the work there is to be done, and which as soon as it comes to power, if it ever does and I doubt it, but in any case, would fire a number of these public servants right away, and second, a Party that is constantly complaining about the inefficiency of public servants—

An Hon. Member: It's true!

Mr. Bussières: —to see them complain instead of congratulating a Department that sets objectives for employee performance and efficiency.

[English]

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, I want to inform the Minister that I have followed the debate and my colleagues have kept me informed.

REQUEST FOR REASSESSMENT OF AFFECTED TAXPAYERS' ACCOUNTS

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I want to tell the Minister that in our constituency office small businessmen, part-time farmers, people with capital gains assessments, and senior citizens, have talked to us and asked what they can do to get a fair assessment. Now we have this kind of information, and if the Minister thinks I am going to buy his line, he is wrong.

In view of the fact that this revelation is out that there were quotas in Winnipeg, that there was this kind of assessment, and that these people had to have five accounts at \$10,000 each, what is the Minister going to do in the name of fairness for these people who want a hearing with Revenue Canada? What does he have in place to give them a fair assessment, rather than the view that these tax collectors were there either to get their quotas completed or to confiscate the personal assets of these taxpayers?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I have a fairly high opinion of the Hon. Member's intellectual honesty and his honesty per se.

I would therefore ask him to make a distinction between the auditing function and the assessment issued following an audit, and subsequently we have the collecting function which comes after a notice of assessment has been issued, in other words, after the amount of money owing to the Government has been evaluated and the taxpayer has refused to respond to the notice of assessment. The amount is then referred to another Division which is the Collections Division, and if the Hon. Member makes those fundamental distinctions between these different functions, he will realize that he has unfortunately