

*Adjournment Debate*

\$85 a square foot, which represents a difference of \$10 million. The Minister told me that he expected Air Canada to make a statement justifying the choice of Beaver Hall Place and that if I was not satisfied, he would add to this statement. Air Canada has given no explanation for its decision. Mr. Drabinski told the newspapers: We are not willing to discuss publicly the various bids submitted to us. The company does not want to speak about figures which are so far apart. Mr. Drabinski of Air Canada also refused to give any details in reply to our second question which asked for the rationale behind the choice of Beaver Hall Place at a clearly higher cost.

In view of the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I think the public and myself are entitled to know why Air Canada will not publicly account for its choosing a building for its new headquarters which will cost the taxpayers \$10 million more than it should and the reasons why the Minister refuses to tell us what is now being investigated. We shall continue to pry into this. The contract is obviously under investigation. This was admitted publicly. The Solicitor General refused point blank to rise in this House to reply to my question. The Minister of Justice (Mr. MacGuigan) stated that he would have nothing to say as long as the investigation has not been completed and he also refused to say whether the results of this inquiry would be made public. In my opinion, since Canadians must pay \$10 million more than they should, they are entitled to know the reasons for the investigation and, even more important, its results. We are also entitled to know why Air Canada decided to transfer its headquarters and chose a bid which was \$10 million higher than the lowest offer. These are all questions to which we would like a reply for the sake of the Canadian people. I believe that the Government should not wait any longer before giving us the information to which we are entitled.

• (1825)

[English]

**Mr. Al MacBain (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond on behalf of the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Canada (Mr. MacGuigan) to the Hon. Member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle).

It is Department of Justice policy of long standing that unless someone is charged as a result of a police investigation the results of the investigation are not made a matter of public record. This policy is dictated by considerations of ordinary fair play. If a charge is preferred, the position is quite different. A person charged with an offence must be given an opportunity to defend himself before the courts and in accordance with the rules of law.

It is well known that in the course of investigating the commission of alleged offences peace officers receive innuendo and dubious allegations of wrong doing which fall far short of what the law requires to launch criminal proceedings. Is that kind of thing to be made public? How and where is the individual who is the subject of innuendo and allegations of the kind just mentioned to defend himself or herself? To make reports prepared by RCMP investigators public in the absence of the preferring of charges could amount to nothing but character assassination and the abuse of police power.

The unequivocal position of the Attorney General of Canada is that he has not the slightest intention of allowing RCMP reports to be used improperly and unfairly, to the possible detriment of anyone in Canada.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

At 6.29 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.