

Oral Questions

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, there is indeed an amount of urgency in the question because some people have expressed worry about delays in implementing the Dubin report. On the advice of the committee, of insiders and outsiders, for the implementation of the Dubin report, I was in a position a few days ago to recommend to cabinet that it should agree with most of the recommendations of that report on the creation of an independent air safety board. Fortunately, cabinet agreed. We will now proceed to the writing of a longer paper which will be the basis for drafting legislation which we hope will be introduced in the fall to the great satisfaction of all my friends here.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE**POSSIBLE CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN ALLEGED BREACH OF GUIDELINES**

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Madam Speaker, may I put a question to the Minister for National Defence. This concerns the frigate program and the possibility of a conflict of interest in the case of a senior officer moving from being in charge of the patrol frigate program to the position of president of a subsidiary of one of the major bidders. On October 16, 1980, the minister told the House that he had "... asked the Privy Council to co-ordinate the review of the case." I wonder if the minister could tell the House now what the results of the review were, and what action he has taken, if any?

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, in the case that the hon. member mentions, I do not remember that any issue or any memo was sent to me regarding a conflict of interest.

ACTION TAKEN BY MINISTER

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Madam Speaker, this is an astonishing remark when several billions of dollars worth of contracts are involved and when one of the main movers is in possible conflict of interest. I do not question the integrity or probity of the officer concerned, but I do question the competence of the dunderheads in the Department of National Defence who approved this transfer after the commodore had gone through the routine of applying for sanction. The minister has to accept responsibility for that. I should like to quote to him from the guidelines, which appear to me to have been abridged, as follows:

An office holder must not... change sides to act for or on behalf of any person or commercial corporation in connection with any specific proceeding, transaction, case or other matter to which the Government of Canada is a party and in which he had a personal and substantial involvement on behalf of a department or agency of the government.

This exactly describes the case referred to. What is the minister doing about it? I do not accept the fact that he may have told the House months ago that the Privy Council was

looking at it and has not bothered to enquire into it again, considering that the contract is being signed today.

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, the case mentioned by the hon. member is well known. If he would like to have answers to all the questions he has asked today, he can put a question on the order paper. I cannot give him all the answers here. All I can say is that there was no conflict of interest. It was in accordance with the guidelines that existed at that moment. That is all I can say now. If the hon. member wants more detail about when the individual was engaged, when he took his pension, etc., we could give all those answers on the order paper.

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DOMINION CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS ACT**HEARING OF PETITIONS**

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to either the Minister of Justice or the President of the Privy Council. It relates to the exchange a week ago between myself and the Prime Minister when I raised the question of the implications of the appointment of the then member for Spadina, Mr. Stollery, to the Senate of Canada in a way that might void proceedings before a special court established to see whether Mr. Stollery had been elected legally or illegally. At the time I pointed out that that was a test case which might also call into question the right to sit in this House of the Liberal member of Parliament for Scarborough Centre and the Liberal member of Parliament for Guelph.

At that time the Prime Minister indicated, as reported at page 11173 of *Hansard*:

I will certainly consider that suggestion... I believe if any minister of this government is involved in that matter, it might be the Minister of Justice or the President of the Privy Council. I will discuss the suggestion made by the Leader of the Opposition with them.

My suggestion was that the Government of Canada knows that it is in the interest of Parliament to have any question of the legality of the right to sit here of members of Parliament solved very quickly. My suggestion was that the government act very quickly to ensure that the question of the right to sit in Parliament of the Liberal members for Scarborough Centre and for Guelph be proceeded with very quickly. That question has added urgency today because Mr. Stollery now has commenced an action, or an application in the courts of Ontario, to squash the action against—

An hon. Member: Quash.

Mr. Clark:—to render inapplicable the action against him in the special court.

My question to the Minister of Justice or to the President of the Privy Council is, will the Government of Canada act, first, to ensure that the action in the case of Spadina remains open, and second, that the speediest possible priority is given to the constitution of special courts to determine whether the