

Supply

Certainly, if someone wants to make a comment—and this is getting to the question which I would like to ask the hon. member—last night, Bernard Landry was on the CBC talking about Quebec's delegates general abroad and he wanted to know if they were true sovereignists. I think he threatened them with dismissal if they were not.

This is another demonstration of intolerance towards the opinions of all Quebecers, if their opinions do not suit the party in power. But I can tell you this, Mr. Speaker; at least we set up a committee of inquiry, a sub-committee, chaired by one of our own people, but also with members of the Bloc Quebecois and Reform Party represented, which will shed light on this matter. Nevertheless, I would like to remind the hon. member that some of his colleagues in Quebec want to investigate good Quebecers whom they do not think are true Quebecers.

• (1540)

Mr. Crête: Mr. Speaker, what the member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine says makes me even more suspicious, because there is a very big difference between that and saying publicly: "We will ensure that appointees conform to our objective as a government, which the people gave us; our objective is to make Quebec sovereign and we will give ourselves the democratic means to achieve this result."

This is very different from giving a mandate to an agency whose composition you do not control that will investigate subjects that you do not know—you do not know what they are investigating or how they will do it. Between these two ways of governing, I have just found another reason to make Quebec a very different country from Canada.

Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I find these comments very regrettable. Canada is a tolerant society, but it is not right, now that there has been a change of government, to point a finger at people who have served in the Quebec government, who have tried to promote Quebec's development outside that province and who have convinced foreign investors to come here. There is a lack of continuity and, unfortunately, I think all this is beginning to sound like McCarthyism: you are not true Americans, you are not real capitalists, etc.

It is unfortunate. This is what makes that argument a dangerous one. This is the reason why the government seeks to promote tolerance and welcomes opposition members and stakeholders to come and voice their concern and views on how to manage CSIS.

Mr. Crête: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine is comparing apples and oranges. We are talking here about a dramatic situation. We are not talking, as I

said earlier, about people who have been mandated by the public and who form a proper and transparent organization.

We are talking about situations such as investigating the CBC, a national broadcasting network, or Mr. Bristow having infiltrated the Reform Party. In my opinion, CSIS is an organization which, in a way, chooses its own clientele. In the seventies barns and farms had to be set on fire before investigators were hired to set up the security intelligence service. Nowadays, they try to influence recognized political parties, enough to warrant investigation.

There is a true lack of transparency which must be corrected. Indeed, in a society, it is important to know what is going on, otherwise perceptions from the past will persist in the future.

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne): Mr. Speaker, I would like to preface my speech by pointing out that a review committee was set up in 1990 precisely to reform the CSIS Act. The committee members were astonished to find out about another organization called the Communications Security Establishment, commonly known as CSE, and the extent of its powers.

CSE comes directly under the Department of National Defence. It is a collateral organization similar to CSIS. According to the sub-committee's estimates, CSE has a supposedly secret budget of about \$200 million, even though the House of Commons or any of its committees or sub-committees has no say in CSE's activities.

As I said, CSE's budget is buried away in the overall budget of the Department of National Defence so that we cannot come up with an exact figure. Using estimates, the sub-committee reckoned at the time that CSE had a budget of about \$200 million over which we have no control.

Even worse, the members of this 1990 review committee reported that even SIRC had no say in CSE's intelligence activities. In 1990, this committee made 117 specific recommendations.

• (1545)

Since then, only two or three of these recommendations have been adopted, and by the previous government at that. Why? Because the committee recommended that the Communications Security Establishment be formally set up by a piece of legislation that we could oversee, examine and review.

The committee also wanted SIRC to ensure that CSE's activities were carried out in accordance with the law and to report to Parliament.

Why were the members of the 1990 review committee so concerned, and what exactly is CSE? In an article published last May, the daily newspaper *Le Droit* explained a little bit what could be learned about CSE and I quote: "The Communications Security Establishment carries out its activities in total secrecy, resorting to electronic surveillance to pick up messages from many areas of the world. This high-tech equipment, which is