

Oral Questions

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): Who are they?

Mr. Mulroney: My hon. friend, the Opposition House Leader, says: "Who are they?". They are right here, where it is signed under "those for" and signed under "those against", but the Liberals are listed under "abstentions".

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE**AIR-INDIA CRASH—INFORMER'S ALLEGATIONS**

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. Earlier today he said something deeply disturbing about his responsibility as a Minister. It concerns the allegation by Mr. Besso, who claims that he will submit to a lie detector test to support his claims that the RCMP had relevant information before the Air-India crash that we were discussing earlier, and that will support his claim that the RCMP has documentary evidence that he provided. He is willing to do this.

The Minister said earlier that for him to pursue it further would be to indulge in some kind of political interference. I have a copy of the Act. Section 5 of the Act, dealing with his responsibilities, states that: "The Governor in Council may appoint an officer to be known as the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who, under the direction of the Minister, has the control and management of the Force in all matters connected therewith".

Considering that this holds the Minister responsible for the direction, presumably to be involved if there have been allegations of mismanagement, will the Minister exercise his responsibility to the House properly and investigate directly the serious allegations that have been made about the RCMP?

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I will try once again to make myself quite clear to the Hon. Member. I did discharge my duties. I did pursue it further. I went to the Commissioner of the RCMP and asked him to reinvestigate the matter. He contacted the officers in charge. He has fully discussed it with them, both on the West Coast and here.

The Commissioner has discharged his duty to me and I to the Canadian people. I have looked into it fully. I guess the difference is that I have faith and trust in the integrity of the RCMP and the Hon. Member does not.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister not understand the seriousness of the situation? He is asking the RCMP to be the judge in their own case, which is a violation of all serious administrative practice. Since the serious accusation has been made about RCMP incompetence

that could have led to the deaths of hundreds, does the Minister not agree that he should accept his responsibility as described in the Act and look at the evidence directly, and then make a judgment? If he does not, will he do the proper thing and resign his office right now?

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat that there is absolutely no evidence to indicate from any source that there was any specific threat against Flight 182. There were certainly allegations made that some harm might come to Air-India flights. Those were taken and considered and, as we have already stated, additional security was indeed supplied by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police both at Mirabel and at Toronto.

Everything that should have been done was in fact done, and we again reinvestigated the matter this morning. The story stands. It was true then, and it is true now.

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AIRPORTS**FINGERPRINTING OF EMPLOYEES—TESTING OF DRUG SNIFFING DOGS**

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, my question was for the Minister of Transport but in his absence I will direct it to the Deputy Prime Minister. He will know that next week Transport Canada, in an effort to crack down on the bungling of security at airports across the country, will be requiring cleaning personnel and everyone working in all airports to begin being fingerprinted.

At the same time he should be aware that there are reports from Edmonton International Airport that, as a result of the policies of the Government's customs intelligence division, customs officers have actually been planting drugs in the luggage of passengers who are embarking on international flights in order to check the olfactory sense of drug sniffing dogs, to see if they can actually sniff drugs. Does he not think it is a little ridiculous that, on the one hand, the cleaning staff will now be fingerprinted while, on the other, the Government is allowing the security intelligence service of Customs actually to plant drugs in the luggage of passengers who are embarking on international flights, thus placing those passengers in an untenable position?

Mr. Benjamin: Sniff that one out.

Mr. Axworthy: The Government is going to the dogs.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the very serious allegations that the Hon. Member has outlined. I am sure that the Hon. Minister of Transport will want to look into them.

Mr. Axworthy: Speaking of dogs.