

Oral Questions

Business Development Bank on Friday afternoon issued a statement which I am sure the hon. member must have received. This statement says: "The Federal Business Development Bank has thoroughly reviewed its records once again. These records do not indicate that Senator Michel Cogger did any work on mandates assigned to the Lapointe Rosenstein law firm after his appointment to the Senate". I think that takes care of the issue.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that the Minister also read the statement. And since he read it, as he claims he did, he must know that the statement says: "These records do not indicate that Senator Michel Cogger did any work on mandates assigned to the Lapointe Rosenstein law firm after his appointment to the Senate". What about the contract awarded before his appointment to the Senate and completed afterwards? Did the senator work on those cases, yes or no? Could we have a straight answer, once and for all?

[*English*]

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what the hon. member is asking because I think the Senator said in his statement to the House that before he was a Senator, as a member of a law firm, in fact he did do work on the file. But, as indicated by the president of the Federal Business Development Bank, he has no record of Senator Cogger doing any work on behalf of Lapointe Rosenstein after he became a Senator.

Mr. Boudria: Read it, that's not what it says.

Mr. Andre: That's exactly what it says. I will quote it again. "The Federal Business Development Bank has thoroughly reviewed its records once again. The records do not indicate that Senator Michel Cogger did any work on mandates assigned to the Lapointe Rosenstein law firm after his appointment to the Senate." That is pretty clear to anybody. I realize that if you have an appetite for spicy scandal, the bland truth is disappointing, but you are going to have to accept it.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, if the truth is bland, that is really all I think we are looking for here.

Last week, we were informed by the Solicitor General that the RCMP had begun looking into the recent allegations regarding Senator Cogger. My question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. Has the minister provided to the RCMP the complete list of lawyers authorized to do legal work for the Federal Business Development Bank? If he has not, will he do so immediately, and table that list in the House at the same time?

• (1440)

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member will put that question on the *Order Paper*, I am sure we will try to find an answer.

I think the hon. member would have to admit he is engaging on what would constitute a witch hunt here and he is looking for—pardon me for mixing the metaphors—some further skeletons. I will co-operate in answering any questions he puts on the *Order Paper*, but I cannot be expected to have that information at question period.

Mr. Lee: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question has to do with the same thing. This is a very ordinary list, an administratively used list in every FBDB office across the country.

On Friday we asked whether Senator Cogger or his firm have had any dealings with any government agency or department. We did not get an answer. Therefore, I ask again, and this time I direct my question to the Prime Minister, does the government have any knowledge now of Senator Cogger or his firm doing work for any other government agencies or departments after his being appointed to the Senate in May 1986?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all colleagues in the House will know that by the very nature of that question, it can only be answered on the *Order Paper*.

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INCOME TAX

Mr. Felix Holtmann (Portage—Interlake): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the honourable and distinguished Minister of National Revenue. Canadians are becoming more and more alarmed with their general tax guides. The 1988 general tax guide was more like a