

a group that was interested in developing a project that had been considered in Nova Scotia for many years. When the present Minister of State (International Trade) was Premier, Mr. Buchanan, the then Leader of the Opposition, asked him about the feasibility of carrying out this project. Thus, the project that Mr. Gillespie, together with other people, decided to promote in the best interests of the people of Nova Scotia was not a new project.

[English]

Mr. MacKay: Madam Speaker, I did not quite get the last of the Minister's answer, but I think he said in the best interests of presumably everyone.

USE OF FUNDS ALLOCATED TO NOVA SCOTIA

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Minister is aware of a comment by his former Cabinet colleague, Eric Kierans, who said that what he put together was a minimal investment at a minimal risk and was really at the expense of the Canadian people, whether they were Nova Scotians or whether they were Canadians under the federal Government. I wonder whether Mr. Kierans' sentiments are now, with the benefit of mature reflection, shared by the present Minister of Energy, and if he intends, even at this late stage, to do anything about it to take away some of the ironies, whereby this money that was supposed to be spent to develop jobs for Cape Bretoners has been siphoned back to Toronto for the benefit of Alastair Gillespie.

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I think it is a very bad reflection on the Premier of Nova Scotia, Mr. Buchanan—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chrétien:—who has all along been supporting this project. I was talking yesterday with Mr. Buchanan about it, and I asked him if he was in favour of trying to be less dependent on imported fuel and if he was in favour of this project.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Epp: What did he say?

Mr. Chrétien: Fine, you can laugh if you want, but I talked with Mr. Buchanan yesterday. He said that it is a vital project for the future of Nova Scotia. I am glad that at least one Member from Nova Scotia is getting up, because for weeks and months they were all silent about it. He is the first one to get up, but he is well known for what he does. He called his Leader, the former Leader, dog food. I am not surprised that he tried to throw dirt on somebody else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Oral Questions

THE PREMIER OF NOVA SCOTIA

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Since it has been suggested that the Government used the Government of Nova Scotia as a shield to make a profit for Mr. Gillespie, does the Minister share the view of the Hon. Member for Central Nova that the Premier and Government of Nova Scotia are that stupid?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, even if I have politically disagreed with Mr. Buchanan many times since he has been Premier, I have to tell you that I consider Mr. Buchanan a gentleman and a very honourable public servant.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Chrétien: Madam Speaker, I think I have to add to my answer.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I know that the Hon. Minister's afterthoughts are terrific, but he had resumed his seat.

QUERY RESPECTING APPEARANCE OF FAVOURS

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Madam Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. On Tuesday of this week when the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources was asked what was Mr. Gillespie's involvement, he said, as reported at page 23093 of *Hansard*:

I think Mr. Gillespie's contribution was to persuade the various partners in this project—

After reading the documents in which there is a lot of reference to Treasury Board minutes, that changes had to be made and that new Treasury Board submissions had to be ordered, I would like to ask the Prime Minister whether he is still convinced, now that he in his own mind has put the time frame out of this issue as being non-important, that at this stage as well, through all those documents, there was not the appearance that special favours were being granted.

• (1450)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member, as have others, made much of the fact that the submission was changed. Indeed it was, but in a way that would discriminate against Mr. Gillespie. This indicates, indeed, that the officials were conscious of the guidelines, and this, indeed, indicates that with regard to former office holders the two-year period or the one-year period, depending on the particular action, is a relevant one. But that is with regard to former office holders.

I can only express, I repeat, admiration that the officials would have had the presence of mind to dig up the guidelines