

11 Feb, 2008

Government Contracts

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Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): 

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has admitted he broke the rules when he issued a \$122,000 untendered contract to a Conservative friend.

In fact, that same friend received another contract worth only \$350 less than the limit for sole sourcing.

Who did the minister hire to write his budget speech this year? Did he play by the rules this time?

[English]

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Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):  

Mr. Speaker, the budget speech is being prepared within my office. It is not quite ready, but I will be pleased to let the member know soon when we will have the opportunity to use the budget speech.

The work was done by Mr. MacPhie and his company. All of the documents were produced. They have been available for examination by all hon. members. Members can have a look at them for themselves. Hon. members can decide on the reasonableness.

This work was done over several months with respect to policy and communications, and there was value for money.

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Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.):  

Mr. Speaker, he misses the point. Why does he not apologize for breaking the rules?

An ugly pattern is emerging. First, he breaks the contracting rules without saying he is sorry. Now we see 101 finance contracts, just a tad below the \$25,000 limit for sole sourcing.

Does the Prime Minister want to force an early election before all this dirt that is oozing out of the finance department escalates into a mother of all mudslides?

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Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):  

Mr. Speaker, it is good to see this afternoon that the member for Markham—Unionville has slithered out from under his rock once again.

Most of the contracts to which reference is made, and I make the point most of the contracts to which the hon. member refers, were routine departmental contracts in the Department of Finance for photocopying and other services delivered to the Department of Finance. All of it is publicly available for examination.