

Commission of Inquiry into Certain Allegations
Respecting Business and Financial Dealings
Between Karlheinz Schreiber and
the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney



Commission d'enquête concernant les
allégations au sujet des transactions financières et
commerciales entre Karlheinz Schreiber et
le très honorable Brian Mulroney

Commissioner

L'Honorable juge /
The Honourable Justice
Jeffrey James Oliphant

Commissaire

INTERVIEW OF THE HONOURABLE JEAN CHAREST

Held at:

BCF Building
1100 René-Lévesque W. Boulevard
25th Floor
Montreal, Quebec

Monday, March 9, 2009

Tenue à :

Édifice BCF
1100 Boulevard René-Lévesque O.
25^{ième} étage
Montréal, Québec

le lundi 9 mars 2009

Appearances

Mr. Richard Wolson	Lead Commission Counsel
Mr. Evan Roitenberg	Co-Counsel
Mr. Giuseppe Battista	
Mr. André Ryan	The Honourable Jean Charest

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1 Montreal, Quebec / Montréal (Québec)

2 --- Upon commencing on Monday, March 9, 2009

3 at 10:05 a.m. / L'audience débute

4 lundi, le 9 mars 2009 à 10h05

5 MR. ROITENBERG: Thank you. It's
6 Evan Roitenberg for the benefit of the record.

7 We have asked you and you've been
8 kind enough to come and meet with us this morning
9 so that we can ask you some questions about your
10 involvement with the Thyssen Bear Head Project
11 back in the early nineties in your role as a
12 Minister of the Crown.

13 Now, ---

14 MR. RYAN: Mr. Roitenberg, as
15 agreed between Commission counsel and myself, at
16 this point I'd like to make a very brief
17 introductory presentation, if I may.

18 MR. ROITENBERG: Sure, please do.

19 Me RYAN: Alors, Monsieur Charest,
20 effectivement comme vous l'avez indiqué, a accepté
21 de vous rencontrer dans le cadre de cette
22 rencontre préliminaire. Et pour accommoder la
23 Commission et ses avocats notamment, il a accepté
24 aussi de le faire en langue anglaise.

25 Évidemment, si nous devons

1 ultérieurement devoir témoigner devant l'enquête
2 publique, Monsieur Charest a exprimé une nette
3 préférence pour le faire en français le cas
4 échéant. Merci.

5 Je peux peut-être dire nous vous
6 remercions de cette décision.

7 MR. ROITENBERG: In anticipation
8 of today's meeting, I believe on the 26th of
9 February, we forwarded to your counsel certain
10 documents so that you would have an opportunity to
11 familiarize yourself ---

12 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

13 MR. ROITENBERG: --- with some of
14 the background documents. And as well, there was
15 an inquiry made through your counsel as to whether
16 or not you were still in possession of your
17 calendars or day timers for the appropriate
18 periods of time, and I understand that you're not.

19 HON. J. CHAREST: We searched our
20 -- whatever records we could get our hands on and
21 we, I think, found today documents that we handed
22 over to you on a monthly calendar, which goes from
23 the month of May 1993 through the month of
24 September 1993.

25 MR. ROITENBERG: Yes, sir, and I

1 thank you for that, but in terms of appointments
2 with any degree of specificity, this is as good as
3 it gets.

4 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes, that is
5 what we have and we searched the documents at the
6 the National Archives of Canada to whom we handed
7 over some documents when I left federal politics
8 in 1998. And we also looked in my riding of
9 Sherbrooke and I had an assistant search whatever
10 documents that we have in our possession there and
11 this is what she came up with and what we are
12 handing over to you today.

13 MR. RYAN: For the benefit of the
14 Commission and the Commission counsel, I do have
15 records of all my exchanges with the so-called
16 custodian of Mr. Charest's documents at the
17 library at Archives Canada and so do I for
18 documents which were looked through by his
19 personal assistant in the riding of Sherbrooke.

20 MR. ROITENBERG: Well, we
21 certainly thank you for your efforts that you made
22 in trying to -- thank both of you for the efforts
23 that you made in trying to accommodate that
24 request.

25 MR. RYAN: Off record for a

1 second.

2 We also dug in boxes together
3 yesterday afternoon in Mr. Charest's office and
4 found -- came up empty.

5 MR. ROITENBERG: It's a lot of
6 effort.

7 Now, Mr. Charest, do you remember
8 at all your dealings with a gentleman by the name
9 of Karlheinz Schreiber?

10 HON. J. CHAREST: I don't remember
11 having dealings with Mr. Schreiber. I know Mr.
12 Schreiber. He has become notorious of course
13 because of all the media coverage he has received
14 recently and I don't remember meeting Mr.
15 Schreiber.

16 It's quite possible that I may
17 have met him and because we do meet a lot of
18 people, especially if it was during the period of
19 the leadership race, but I don't -- I don't have a
20 recollection of a meeting with Mr. Schreiber on
21 this issue.

22 MR. ROITENBERG: Okay. Do you
23 recall supporting or being involved in any way
24 with the Bear Head Project?

25 HON. J. CHAREST: I want to be

1 very honest with you. You know, the recent
2 notoriety of Mr. Schreiber and all the media
3 attention he's received has brought this project
4 certainly to my attention. But when I think back
5 to 1993 or before that in terms of the project
6 itself, I don't remember any specific deals. I
7 don't have any -- you know, very or specific
8 recollections of having dealt with this project.

9 I've been through the notes and
10 I've seen that there was a meeting and -- and --
11 between Mr. Doucet and apparently Mr. Corbeil at
12 the time and myself. Even then, I don't remember
13 that meeting happening and I don't say it didn't
14 happen. It's just that I don't -- I don't have
15 memory of that meeting happening.

16 MR. ROITENBERG: Okay. We've
17 alluded to these documents. We provided to you a
18 memorandum ---

19 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

20 MR. ROITENBERG: --- from an L.
21 Beverly -- or excuse me, from the Project Officer,
22 Marine and Land Defence Systems to Lloyd Beverly,
23 Director, Marine and Land Defence Systems, dated
24 September the 15th, 1992.

25 In fact, we've provided it to you

1 twice because there seems to be an additional page
2 accompanying one of the copies.

3 In this document, it speaks of the
4 Bear Head Project and the revisiting of a proposal
5 having to do with the Bear Head Project ---

6 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

7 MR. ROITENBERG: --- in 1992. And
8 there's a statement that what's different on this
9 occasion in the second paragraph is that Ministers
10 Masse, Bouchard and Charest have pledged support.

11 Do you recall being approached by
12 any other minister of the Crown seeking your
13 support for this project in Quebec?

14 HON. J. CHAREST: I don't have any
15 recollection of having pledged any support. I
16 read the note. I have no reason to contradict the
17 note but I also, as I read the note, thought that
18 if it was a pledge of support, I -- usually a
19 formal pledge of support would come in a form --
20 some form or another.

21 It could be a letter or there
22 would be a committee meeting or it would be an
23 item on an agenda of a discussion of some
24 committee meeting, a ministerial committee meeting
25 which I don't see here.

1 So I can only assume that the
2 issue may have been raised and someone has assumed
3 that I was a supporter or that I voiced support.
4 I don't remember that ever happening.

5 MR. ROITENBERG: Okay. Now, just
6 for the benefit of the record, I'm referring to a
7 document which goes by Identification Number
8 AGC00037 and AGC00038, as the two documents to
9 which I'm referring.

10 --- DOCUMENT APPENDED NO. 1 - AGC00037

11 --- DOCUMENT APPENDED NO. 2 - AGC00038

12 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

13 MR. ROITENBERG: And it will be
14 the first and second documents which I guess
15 should append themselves to the record so that any
16 readers can see what we have referred to.

17 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Mr. Ryan, do
18 you have any objection to that? It's Richard
19 Wolson for the monitor.

20 MR. RYAN: You want the records in
21 other words to be -- you want those documents to
22 be annexed and attached to the transcript?

23 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Only because
24 one reading the transcript would then have a more
25 clear understanding of what the transcript refers

1 to.

2 MR. RYAN: And my understanding is
3 that these documents were already communicated to
4 the parties who have standing in this Commission.

5 MR. ROITENBERG: Yes. These
6 documents have been approved for release and
7 either have been released or in the process of
8 being released. Everybody will have them.

9 MR. RYAN: So the answer is no, I
10 do not have an objection.

11 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Thank you, sir.

12 MR. ROITENBERG: To the second of
13 those documents, the additional page, which is
14 marked page 4 of 4, of Document AGC00038, the
15 additional paragraph has at its conclusion:

16 "This time, however, DND
17 officials have informed us
18 that Minister Masse is
19 strongly supportive and has
20 enlisted the backup of
21 Ministers Bouchard and
22 Charest."

23 And again, does that assist in
24 directing your mind to being approached by
25 Minister Masse specifically for your support?

1 HON. J. CHAREST: No, it doesn't
2 add to my recollection, and the word "backup" is
3 very generic. So it could mean I guess a number
4 of things whether Minister Masse pledged that
5 support on our behalf or whether it was raised, I
6 fail to remember in what context it would have
7 been raised where this matter would have been.

8 MR. ROITENBERG: Typically,
9 typically within Cabinet, is it uncommon for
10 Ministers to approach their fellow Ministers to
11 seek support, particularly on a regional
12 development initiative of some kind?

13 HON. J. CHAREST: Well, and to be
14 precise, I see in the same document that the last
15 phrase says, "The province and FORDQ are
16 evaluating the proposal" which means the
17 Government of Quebec and the Federal Office of
18 Regional Development of Quebec. And I am not even
19 sure who would have been responsible for the
20 Office at the time. I think it would have been
21 Mr. Bouchard, Benoit Bouchard, to be more precise.
22 He would be evaluating across the project.

23 So I'm assuming here that the
24 Province of Quebec was involved in the project;
25 that they are evaluating it as -- and it seems.

1 By the way, I take that from reading of all the
2 documents you sent. It's something that I
3 concluded after reading the documents that the
4 Province of Quebec was also evaluating through its
5 different departments this project.

6 And so this assertion of a backup
7 in support could have been made after a general
8 conversation. But I don't -- I can't see where it
9 would have been formally raised in a cabinet
10 committee meeting or on the agenda and raising it
11 in a conversation isn't the usual way of doing
12 government business either. I mean it's not
13 because you raise it in a conversation with a
14 colleague that the project per se is -- has formal
15 support.

16 And what I'm saying is it's quite
17 different in one case to say, "Well, do you think
18 this is a good idea if we look at this?" than
19 having all the information required to determine
20 whether a project should or should not go ahead.

21 MR. ROITENBERG: So before anybody
22 were to formally in any fashion count on your
23 support or openly say that you are supporting
24 something, you would expect to be able to find a
25 document expressing that on your behalf?

1 HON. J. CHAREST: Well, I can say
2 it from experience, and I've been at this for 25
3 years in the job I'm in. There is a world of
4 difference between a project that someone raises
5 and says, "I think this is a good project. Do you
6 think it's a good idea?" and actually having done
7 the work required to determine whether or not the
8 project is worthy for support. There's a world of
9 difference and when you're in government, there
10 certainly is a world of difference.

11 MR. ROITENBERG: The next document
12 that was provided to you is, for the benefit of
13 the record, Document AGC00122, and it appears to
14 be a request penned by a Joanne Lafrance. Does
15 that name mean anything to you?

16 --- DOCUMENT APPENDED NO. 3 - AGC00122

17 HON. J. CHAREST: Which name is
18 that again?

19 MR. ROITENBERG: Joan or Joanne
20 Lafrance.

21 HON. J. CHAREST: Joanne Lafrance,
22 exact.

23 (OFF-RECORD DISCUSSION/DISCUSSION HORS ENREGISTREMENT)

24 HON. J. CHAREST: Okay. Joanne
25 Lafrance worked for me as an assistant.

1 MR. ROITENBERG: This document
2 appears to be a request for briefing.

3 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

4 MR. ROITENBERG: From the body of
5 the document, it seems to be penned at your
6 request requesting a briefing note on Thyssen.

7 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

8 MR. ROITENBERG: Wanting
9 information on the company; what they manufacture;
10 who owns them in anticipation of a meeting between
11 yourself and Minister Corbeil on Thursday, July
12 the 29th, 1993.

13 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

14 MR. ROITENBERG: And you've had a
15 chance to look at this document?

16 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

17 MR. ROITENBERG: Which should
18 probably be the third Appendix to the transcript
19 when one is created.

20 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

21 MR. ROITENBERG: And it goes on,
22 this document does, to have as an attachment a
23 memorandum, which I trust you've had the chance to
24 review.

25 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

1 MR. ROITENBERG: Which appears to
2 be the answer to the request for a briefing note.

3 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

4 MR. ROITENBERG: As penned by
5 Harry Swain.

6 HON. J. CHAREST: Correct.

7 MR. ROITENBERG: Do you recall
8 having a meeting with Minister Corbeil on the
9 issue of Thyssen Bear Head?

10 HON. J. CHAREST: I don't recall
11 the meeting per se, but I have no reason to
12 believe that this note, of course, didn't reflect
13 the fact there was a meeting -- and certainly a
14 meeting did happen.

15 MR. ROITENBERG: Now if we are
16 informed by the prior two documents that we have
17 reviewed, which speak of your support of this
18 project, and we've discussed whether or not that
19 may or may not have been an accurate statement,
20 would you expect that nine or 10 months later, you
21 would be seeking the background information if
22 you'd already pledged your support?

23 HON. J. CHAREST: I see it as the
24 process of government if, you know, the issue is
25 raised again, well then there's an examination of

1 the file. And that's what I, from the documents
2 that you have handed over to me, that's what I
3 see. There's an examination of the file. So a
4 meeting with someone -- with Minister Corbeil on
5 this issue and the request to the Department --
6 Trade, which -- Industry of which I was ---

7 MR. ROITENBERG: The Minister.

8 HON. J. CHAREST: --- the Minister
9 responsible. There is a difference. Back in
10 1992, I was not the Minister of Industries; the
11 Minister of Environment. And since then, I had
12 become the Minister of Industry. So then my
13 ministerial responsibilities are directly involved
14 here, and I asked for a meeting and I asked the
15 Department for a note.

16 And this is pretty much a standard
17 process. I would have a meeting on an issue and I
18 would ask a note to the Department before the
19 meeting asking them what information they can give
20 me about the issue and the subject that will be
21 discussed at the meeting.

22 MR. ROITENBERG: So it would be
23 fair to say that even if it was accurate that you
24 had offered some words of support in the September
25 past, it doesn't make it inconsistent that you

1 would then want a briefing note of the background
2 of the company in your new role as Minister of
3 Industry?

4 HON. J. CHAREST: No, it would not
5 be inconsistent.

6 MR. ROITENBERG: Now, as this
7 meeting on July the 29th, if in fact it took
8 place, preceded a meeting that I am going to ask
9 you about in a moment on August the 26th, 1993,
10 you don't have the recollection of the July 29th
11 meeting to advise whether the August 26th meeting
12 to come would have been discussed. Is that fair?

13 HON. J. CHAREST: I don't remember
14 the July 29th meeting and again I have no reason
15 to believe it did not happen. I'm not denying it
16 happened. It's just that I don't have the
17 recollection of it. And then the August 26th
18 meeting, I don't remember either, but they are
19 obviously linked. They seem really -- well, they
20 are obviously because it's the same issue that's
21 being discussed.

22 MR. ROITENBERG: Okay.

23 And the next Document, which is
24 noted as AGC00045, is the Memorandum penned by
25 Helmut Zankl with the subject the Thyssen visit,

1 August the 26th, 1993. It appears to be a summary
2 of the discussions from that meeting.

3 --- DOCUMENT APPENDED NO. 4 - AGC00045

4 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

5 MR. ROITENBERG: And it
6 indicates that present at the meeting were
7 Ministers Charest and Corbeil, K.-H. Schreiber,
8 President, Bear Head Industries and F. Doucet,
9 legal counsel of Bear Head Industries.

10 And again, other than the
11 documentation, you have no independent
12 recollection of the meeting occurring?

13 HON. J. CHAREST: No, I don't, I
14 don't remember this meeting happening. And again,
15 I wanted to point out it does not mean the meeting
16 did not happen. It's just that I don't remember
17 the meeting.

18 MR. ROITENBERG: I assume then
19 that you don't recall how the meeting came about,
20 at whose request?

21 HON. J. CHAREST: No. Well it
22 would be -- I can't honestly say I know how the
23 meeting came about.

24 MR. ROITENBERG: What would the
25 normal course be for a meeting like that

1 occurring? Would it be at the instance of the
2 company or with it be at the instance of the
3 Ministry?

4 HON. J. CHAREST: It would be --
5 it would be one or both. And it's not uncommon --
6 I would say it's a more common to call a Minister
7 and ask for a meeting on a file to discuss it.
8 That is very common and part of the normal course
9 of business, the government has official file that
10 is active between the parties and the Minister who
11 has an interest in it.

12 I'm assuming here that Jean
13 Corbeil's interest is the fact that he's a
14 Minister responsible for the Island of Montreal
15 and, more specifically, his riding is Anjou, in
16 the easter part of the Island of Montreal. And so
17 he is attempting to see whether this project, I'm
18 assuming, is a project that's viable and will
19 warrant government support.

20 A meeting could also happen with
21 representatives of a company if that they ask for
22 it; but usually they would go through my office,
23 Ministerial Office either the -- and typically it
24 would be the Assistant who would be responsible
25 for those files, who would receive the request and

1 would make the recommendation to go ahead or not
2 with the meeting.

3 MR. ROITENBERG: From the
4 perspective of what evolves from the meeting, if
5 there's further questions that you have coming
6 from such a meeting, do you direct to staff
7 members to check out certain things that you've
8 learned at the meeting, to follow-up on different
9 aspects? Is that what would happen next?

10 HON. J. CHAREST: Well, quite
11 typically what I would do and have always done is
12 two things: the staff member who works directly
13 under my authority is someone I would describe as
14 being a member of political staff who works with
15 me would be given an assignment to follow-up on
16 the file. And the second thing that would happen,
17 quite typically, is that the request on to the
18 department would follow-up so that they could give
19 us, or give me their advice on the file.

20 MR. ROITENBERG: And did you have
21 someone on your staff by the name of Carter?

22 HON. J. CHAREST: Bruce Carter.

23 MR. ROITENBERG: Do you recall
24 asking Mr. Carter to get involved in this project?

25 HON. J. CHAREST: No, I don't

1 remember asking Mr. Carter to get involved in the
2 project but it's quite possible that he was the
3 person in my office who was handling the file. I
4 don't know that.

5 MR. ROITENBERG: Okay.

6 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Sir, it's
7 Richard Wolson for the monitor.

8 You had indicated to my colleague,
9 Mr. Roitenberg, that you -- you don't think that
10 you knew Mr. Schreiber. What about Fred Doucet?
11 Did you know Fred Doucet from your history in
12 Ottawa?

13 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes, yes I knew
14 Fred Doucet.

15 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: And did you know
16 that he was a lobbyist, registered lobbyist in
17 Ottawa?

18 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

19 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Would he -- did
20 you have a relationship with him, a friendship, a
21 business relationship? How would you describe
22 your relationship with Mr. Doucet?

23 HON. J. CHAREST: He's someone I
24 knew. And my first contact ever with Mr. Doucet I
25 remember very well ---

1 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Yes?

2 HON. J. CHAREST: --- it was over
3 the phone because he was the person who called me
4 on behalf of the Prime Minister to ask me to meet
5 the Prime Minister in 1986 when the Prime Minister
6 named me to Cabinet. He's the one who put the
7 call in, so it's the kind of think that you
8 remember obviously.

9 So I remember very well my
10 conversation with Mr. Doucet at that time. He was
11 at that time working in the Prime Minister's
12 office obviously, and after that he went out to
13 work as a lobbyist. But after that, I have no or
14 very little contacts with Mr. Doucet except
15 recognising him.

16 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Would he have
17 had the kind of relationship with you that he
18 could pick up the phone and call you to meet him
19 about a project, for instance?

20 HON. J. CHAREST: No, not
21 typically. This isn't the kind of relationship
22 where he would pick up the phone and call me
23 directly, for example.

24 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Okay.

25 HON. J. CHAREST: If that's the

1 question, is this the kind of relationship where
2 you would get through to me immediately if you
3 were on the line?

4 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Yes.

5 HON. J. CHAREST: No. He would
6 not be in that kind of relationship with me. He
7 would typically talk to someone in my office. Now
8 maybe if he insisted a lot he could get through to
9 me but it's not the kind of relationship I would
10 take on, you know, spontaneously because it's Mr.
11 Doucet on the line. It wasn't that kind -- I
12 wasn't close to him.

13 MR. ROITENBERG: That document
14 that we had referred to, AGC00045 should be the
15 next document that will be appended. I don't
16 believe I specified as such.

17 MR. RYAN: Well you referred
18 earlier to AGC00122.

19 MR. ROITENBERG: Yes.

20 MR. RYAN: Do you also want to
21 introduce this?

22 MR. ROITENBERG: If I hadn't
23 indicated, I will. That would be the third
24 document, and 45 would be Number 4.

25 And the fifth document I would

1 want appended is the next document, which is
2 AGC00176.

3 --- DOCUMENT APPENDED NO. 5 - AGC00176

4 MR. ROITENBERG: Now this
5 document, Mr. Charest, if you could look at it,
6 seems to be a copy of the memorandum that was
7 provided to you in response to your request for a
8 Briefing Note ---

9 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

10 MR. ROITENBERG: --- in
11 anticipation of your meeting, except this has some
12 changes to that document.

13 The recommendation seems to be
14 different. On the former it indicated none: on
15 this document it indicates that the writer
16 recommend you listen and encourage your visitors
17 to continue to work with ISC officials in
18 identifying initiatives, et cetera, et cetera, but
19 it then offers some talking points in anticipation
20 to the meeting.

21 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

22 MR. ROITENBERG: Is it typical
23 that in a Briefing Note such as this, you would be
24 offered certain insights or topics that you may
25 want to cover?

1 HON. J. CHAREST: It depends on
2 the departments and the way people work, frankly.
3 Each Minister is different, some of them want
4 talking points, others do not want talking points.
5 I have no preference, I said preference, I don't
6 usually take talking points and thinking of the
7 way I work now, I have departments, being Premier
8 of Quebec, I have some departments who when they
9 do briefing notes up, they include talking points
10 and others don't. And I don't have any marked
11 preference, not that I'd follow them anyway.

12 In a lot of cases, you know, it's
13 something that depends on the style of the
14 department and the Deputy Minister, so the talking
15 points as you can see are usually pretty general.

16 MR. ROITENBERG: I would assume
17 that you have no specific recollection as to
18 whether you saw the talking points or not?

19 HON. J. CHAREST: I -- knowing how
20 I work, I would have read the note, I would have
21 read the talking points before. I just typically
22 read the material that is sent up to me.

23 MR. ROITENBERG: That having been
24 said, would you know at this point which of these
25 two memos you had received in anticipation of the

1 meeting or whether you would have received both?

2 HON. J. CHAREST: I would probably
3 - let me go back to the other memo ---

4 MR. RYAN: Just for the record if I
5 could, these documents, they refer to different
6 meetings, correct?

7 MR. ROITENBERG: No, they're both
8 in anticipation.

9 MR. RYAN: Well one refers to the
10 meeting with Mr. Corbeil on July 29th ---

11 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

12 MR. RYAN:--- and the other is ---

13 MR. ROITENBERG: Yes, yes. No, I
14 apologize, yes. One is in anticipation of August;
15 one is in anticipation of July.

16 MR. RYAN: So in other words, the
17 briefing note didn't change that much in between -
18 - over that month period except for the talking
19 points and some minor changes.

20 MR. ROITENBERG: And the
21 recommendation.

22 HON. J. CHAREST: That was my
23 understanding. And by the way, the meeting with
24 Corbeil would not have included talking points.
25 It would not -- and the Deputy Minister would not

1 include talking points for a meeting between two
2 ministers.

3 MR. ROITENBERG: Between
4 ministers.

5 HON. J. CHAREST: Include talking
6 points or suggested talking points or a meeting
7 with an outside party. So that's why there's
8 talking points in this case.

9 MR. ROITENBERG: Now, the fourth
10 document that we had addressed was the summary of
11 that August 26th meeting.

12 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

13 MR. ROITENBERG: In terms of
14 what's reflected here in the summary, Thyssen's
15 unwillingness to provide a business plan, certain
16 military officials from DND, according to the
17 summary, having indicated a preference for Thyssen
18 vehicles, are these things that you can recall
19 being discussed with you?

20 HON. J. CHAREST: I don't recall
21 them being discussed. I have no reason to believe
22 that they were not discussed.

23 I don't remember them being
24 discussed.

25 MR. ROITENBERG: We've discussed

1 Mr. Carter, and one of the documents we've
2 provided you, which would be noted as Document
3 AGC00047, which is a letter from a Thyssen ---

4 HON. J. CHAREST: Ah yes.

5 MR. ROITENBERG: --- BHI --
6 Thyssen Bear Head official by the name of Massmann
7 ---

8 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

9 MR. ROITENBERG: --- to Brian
10 Carter in your office.

11 HON. J. CHAREST: M'hm.

12 MR. ROITENBERG: Did you have
13 another individual working for you in your office
14 by the name of Perron?

15 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

16 MR. ROITENBERG: In the first
17 paragraph of this letter, the author, Mr.
18 Massmann, seems to indicate that there has been a
19 meeting between Mr. Carter and Mr. Perron and Mr.
20 Massmann on September the 10th, 1993.

21 HON. J. CHAREST: Right.

22 MR. ROITENBERG: If such a meeting
23 occurred, if this is accurate, and Mr. Perron and
24 Mr. Carter had met with Mr. Massmann, would this
25 have been a meeting that may have been undertaken

1 at your direction or with your knowledge?

2 HON. J. CHAREST: Well, I don't
3 have any knowledge of it. I don't remember it,
4 and so I don't remember whether I asked them to
5 meet. They would not have needed direction from
6 me. Yet, the file was active. I was the Minister
7 of Industry. It would be normal that they act on
8 their own initiative.

9 MR. ROITENBERG: I take it,
10 though, if they were acting on their own
11 initiative or at your instance, in either way,
12 would they report back to you as to the nature of
13 their meeting and any things they found out?

14 HON. J. CHAREST: If it was
15 relevant, if they felt it needed ministerial
16 direction, they would. If not -- it's an ongoing
17 file and it's proceeding.

18 In this case, you know, as we walk
19 through the documents and the timing of the
20 documents, what I see is an active file and a
21 company asking the Government of Canada to support
22 a project, and that's usually done.

23 So someone in the Minister's
24 office is apprised of it and they follow the file
25 and they do whatever work needs to be done in

1 terms of what information is needed to move it
2 along, and the department does its work and they
3 move it along.

4 If at one point ministerial
5 intervention is required, well then we are sent a
6 note or asked to make a decision or direction, but
7 it depends on the file.

8 MR. ROITENBERG: And when you use
9 the term "ministerial intervention" ---

10 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah?

11 MR. ROITENBERG: --- what kind of
12 action could that cover on the Minister's part to
13 warrant information having to go from one of these
14 individuals within the office to yourself?

15 HON. J. CHAREST: Well, for
16 example, this file, the way it concluded, it
17 finishes with a request to DND to test the vehicle
18 because we've come to the conclusion, obviously,
19 that this request for funding is not going to be
20 supported if there's no justification to support a
21 project at this time.

22 But we find there's enough of a
23 case here to test the vehicle. So that's -- so we
24 direct a letter and send the letter off to the
25 Minister of National Defence saying, "Can you test

1 the vehicle?"

2 MR. ROITENBERG: And you have as
3 the next document, if I'm not mistaken -- excuse
4 me, not the next document; the one following the
5 next document ---

6 MR. RYAN: Mr. Roitenberg, for the
7 record, we will register the Thyssen letter as
8 Document 6?

9 MR. ROITENBERG: Yes.

10 --- DOCUMENT APPENDED NO. 6 - AGC000176

11 MR. RYAN: Okay. Thank you.

12 MR. ROITENBERG: Thank you.

13 I was going to come back to that,
14 but thank you for reminding me.

15 The document that is marked
16 LAL00064 -- it's the last document in the package
17 ---

18 MR. RYAN: Last document ---

19 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

20 MR. ROITENBERG: --- is a letter
21 from Tom Siddon -- the Honourable Tom Siddon, who
22 was the Minister of the Department of National
23 Defence at the time ---

24 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

25 MR. ROITENBERG: --- to yourself

1 and Minister Corbeil, referencing a letter jointly
2 signed by yourself and Minister Corbeil on
3 September the 21st, 1993, suggesting that this
4 might be a project that DND may wish to look at --
5 -

6 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

7 MR. ROITENBERG: --- in terms of
8 research, development and testing.

9 MR. RYAN: I assume, for the
10 purposes of today at this time that you have not
11 found the letter to which the Honourable Siddon
12 refers when writing back to Mr. Charest and
13 Corbeil?

14 MR. ROITENBERG: Can we go off the
15 record for a moment?

16 (DISCUSSION OFF THE RECORD)

17 THE COURT REPORTER: We are back
18 on the record.

19 MR. ROITENBERG: We were
20 discussing the letter from Minister Siddon to
21 yourself and Minister Corbeil.

22 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

23 MR. ROITENBERG: If in fact there
24 had been this request by yourself and Minister
25 Corbeil to Minister Siddon in a letter, September

1 21st, 1993 following such meetings between Mr.
2 Carter and Mr. Perron with Mr. Massmann of the
3 company, would you expect that there would have
4 been some briefing materials provided to you by
5 Mr. Carter or Mr. Perron following their meeting
6 before your penning of such a letter?

7 HON. J. CHAREST: Not necessarily.
8 They could have dealt directly with the department
9 and not talked to me. And it would not have been
10 necessary if the situation had not evolved, for
11 example, since the last meeting that they had.
12 Meaning that essentially the situation remains
13 what it is, well then they will just proceed and a
14 letter will come up to my desk and I will sign it,
15 and it will move ahead.

16 MR. ROITENBERG: That was going to
17 be my next question. In the situation of the
18 penning of a letter, it's not as if you sit down
19 with pen and paper in hand?

20 HON. J. CHAREST: No, no, no.

21 MR. ROITENBERG: It's drafted for
22 you by one of the individuals who has been
23 involved in the file?

24 HON. J. CHAREST: And typically
25 the letter would be drafted by an official as

1 opposed to a member of my staff in most cases.

2 So a letter that is drafted by a
3 member of the staff that may have required some
4 special attention, there would be more of a
5 political angle to it or something, but it
6 typically would be written -- now, if you read
7 between the lines all the way from the beginning
8 to the end, obviously this project did not have
9 the support of the department. It's quite clear.
10 You don't need to read a lot between the lines to
11 find that the department did not support this
12 project.

13 In the end, this was a way for --
14 and the response of Mr. Siddon, by the way, is
15 quite -- when you read between the lines, it says,
16 "Well, we're ready to test it, but on the cost..."
17 So it's not a very supportive response.

18 MR. ROITENBERG: And if I hadn't
19 indicated earlier, that document, the letter from
20 Minister Siddon, could be marked as the next
21 appendix.

22 MR. RYAN: Which I gather is
23 seven?

24 MR. ROITENBERG: Yes.

25 --- DOCUMENT APPENDED NO. 7 - LAL00064

1 MR. ROITENBERG: The document that
2 immediately precedes the letter from Minister
3 Siddon ---

4 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

5 MR. ROITENBERG: --- appears to be
6 the memorialization of a meeting that covered a
7 number of topics, including the Bear Head issue at
8 a meeting held on September the 15th, 1993.

9 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

10 MR. ROITENBERG: And I am
11 certainly not concerned with anything but the Bear
12 Head Industry ---

13 MR. RYAN: I was going to ask you
14 though, Mr. Roitenberg, do you have any indication
15 as to what specifically or where it came from
16 because we suspect that the number has changed but
17 I was wondering whether the Commission actually
18 knows of its origin?

19 MR. ROITENBERG: One of the
20 reasons why I saved it for this juncture of the
21 interview is because I was going to ask Mr.
22 Charest if he recognizes this document as to what
23 it may amount to or from where it might be.

24 MR. RYAN: So why don't you ask
25 the question like that?

1 HON. J. CHAREST: Not then -- I
2 don't know where it's from and it's the first time
3 I've seen it obviously. But in looking at the
4 documents, the page that -- two pages that
5 precede, what I think the document may be is a log
6 of the department, the Deputy Minister's log or
7 follow-up on files and sort of a reporting.

8 So it could be a weekly meeting on
9 different files that are active within the
10 department. That's what I can interpret -- that's
11 what I interpret this document as being, sort of a
12 "procès verbal" -- how do you say?

13 MR. RYAN: A record.

14 HON. J. CHAREST: A record of the
15 ---

16 MR. ROITENBERG: An update in
17 essence of the various files that seem to be
18 working their way through the Minister.

19 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah. It would
20 not be at the ministerial level, the political
21 level. I would assume this is a -- at the Deputy
22 Minister's office, Mr. Swain's level.

23 MR. RYAN: The RCMP record
24 suggests that it came from Industry Canada, right,
25 and that's all you have that's ---

1 MR. ROITENBERG: It is. This is
2 what we have.

3 MR. RYAN: Perfect.

4 MR. ROITENBERG: Thank you for at
5 least giving us some direction as to what that
6 document might be.

7 In our letter to your counsel Mr.
8 Ryan, Mr. Charest, we set out or we highlighted a
9 number of dates ---

10 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

11 MR. ROITENBERG: --- to see if we
12 could address your mind ---

13 MR. RYAN: Are we producing this
14 letter?

15 MR. ROITENBERG: At the moment,
16 no.

17 MR. RYAN: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. ROITENBERG: I'd rather be
19 able to find what its origin is before appending
20 it.

21 MR. RYAN: I'm just trying to be
22 very meticulous about the documents. Okay.

23 MR. ROITENBERG: I'm going to ask
24 you a question of a number of dates. I think all
25 but two of them were highlighted in the letter to

1 you.

2 The first was May the 15th, 1993.

3 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

4 MR. ROITENBERG: In the diary
5 belonging to Fred Doucet, there seems to be a
6 notation indicating "Jean Charest and Philippe
7 Marel".

8 HON. J. CHAREST: Morel.

9 MR. ROITENBERG: Morel. Thank
10 you. Who is that gentleman?

11 HON. J. CHAREST: Philippe Morel
12 was my Chief of Staff when I was Minister of
13 Environment in 1993.

14 MR. ROITENBERG: Okay. Were you
15 aware of or present at any meetings or
16 conversation that you can remember on May the 15th
17 involving Mr. Doucet?

18 HON. J. CHAREST: No. I don't
19 remember that. The information I have from the
20 monthly calendar that we found on that day, it's a
21 Saturday. It indicates nothing in my calendar.

22 And now, could I give you some
23 context on that?

24 MR. ROITENBERG: Please.

25 HON. J. CHAREST: The leadership

1 race is going full throttle for the -- to replace
2 Mr. Mulroney, not only as leader but as Prime
3 Minister. So we are -- at that point, I am deeply
4 involved in the leadership race for the
5 Progressive Conservative Party of Canada. So I am
6 travelling extensively and it is not a period
7 where there are a lot of meetings on any
8 substantive issues.

9 In fact, most everything was
10 reduced to a minimum. The main purpose of my work
11 at that time is to do the leadership race.

12 MR. ROITENBERG: I would assume if
13 during the run up to the convention there's very
14 limited time for meetings. And correct me if I'm
15 wrong; I would assume there would be little time
16 for meetings during the convention?

17 HON. J. CHAREST: Very little
18 time. There is -- I mean in that period of time,
19 I can say with, you know, some confidence that
20 everything is geared around the leadership race.
21 Our time is at a premium and every minute counts.
22 And so there's very little business done,
23 government business done from me in that period of
24 time.

25 I do attend -- I do remember

1 attending some Cabinet Committee meetings because
2 some of them were -- were memorable because of the
3 funny things that happened that were related to
4 our discussion today, but everything is pretty
5 much to a minimum. I'm on the road. I'm
6 travelling throughout Canada and I'm trying to --
7 it was not a very simple thing. I'm trying to
8 meet as many delegates as possible for a vote, and
9 that's what my life is about during that whole
10 period of time.

11 MR. ROITENBERG: On May the 28th,
12 1993, Mr. Doucet's diary indicates Mr. Corbeil's
13 name and a phone number. I take it from what you
14 have just advised us that you wouldn't be aware of
15 what that was regarding, whether it involved you
16 or any input you may have had.

17 MR. RYAN: I just want to make
18 sure I understand the question properly. The the
19 red Q's (phonetic) of the diary indicates Mr.
20 Corbeil's name.

21 MR. ROITENBERG: Yes.

22 MR. RYAN: And a phone number
23 which was not traced to anyone?

24 MR. ROITENBERG: Well, that was
25 going to be my next question as to whether or not

1 the phone number means anything to you.

2 MR. RYAN: Although we can go like
3 that. The name of Mr. Charest does not appear ---

4 MR. ROITENBERG: Mr. Charest's
5 name is not there.

6 MR. RYAN: That's what I wanted to
7 be clear on.

8 MR. ROITENBERG: And the phone
9 number is Montreal area code 514-493-6663.

10 HON. J. CHAREST: It doesn't ring
11 a bell to me.

12 MR. ROITENBERG: Very well.

13 HON. J. CHAREST: We can check
14 that. I'll note that.

15 Me RYAN: Je vais le prendre;
16 c'est correct. Quatre neuf trois (493) ---

17 HON. J. CHAREST: Cinq un quatre
18 (514) ---

19 MR. RYAN: Six six six three
20 (6663).

21 MR. ROITENBERG: Six six six three
22 (6663).

23 On June the 2nd, 1993, again this
24 doesn't involve your name.

25 HON. J. CHAREST: Okay.

1 MR. ROITENBERG: Both Mr. Doucet's
2 diary and Mr. Schreiber's diary indicate a 7:30
3 a.m. meeting with Mr. Corbeil on the 29th floor.
4 It doesn't specify of what building. Both
5 indicate 29th floor.

6 Would you have any recollection of
7 being advised of any meeting involving Minister
8 Corbeil on this project?

9 MR. RYAN: Again, I just want to
10 be very clear. The record -- the diary of Mr.
11 Doucet indicates a meeting with Mr. Corbeil and
12 the diary of Mr. Corbeil indicates a meeting with
13 Mr. Doucet?

14 MR. ROITENBERG: No. The diary of
15 Mr. Doucet indicates "Breakfast, Corbeil, 29th
16 floor". The diary of Mr. Schreiber indicates
17 "Minister Corbeil, 29th floor".

18 MR. RYAN: Okay.

19 MR. ROITENBERG: Both of them
20 indicate 7:30 a.m.

21 MR. RYAN: But just Mr. Corbeil?

22 MR. ROITENBERG: Just Mr. Corbeil.

23 MR. RYAN: Perfect. Frankly, from
24 the letter, I was not too sure whether Mr.
25 Charest's name was also mentioned and that's why I

1 want to be very clear with every verification,
2 each verification.

3 MR. ROITENBERG: Yes.

4 In neither diary does Mr.
5 Charest's name appear.

6 MR. RYAN: That's June 2nd?

7 MR. ROITENBERG: June 2nd, 1993.

8 HON. J. CHAREST: I am not aware
9 of that meeting and I don't -- obviously I don't
10 remember it and I don't see why I would be aware
11 of it.

12 As you can see from the calendar
13 for the month of June, I'm in Toronto on that day
14 speaking at the Empire Club in Toronto at noon and
15 my overnight is in Toronto according to the same
16 schedule.

17 MR. RYAN: If you had been in
18 Moncton, we could assume that there was no 29th
19 floor but in Toronto ---

20 MR. ROITENBERG: Or in Washington.

21 MR. BATTISTA: Just a parenthesis,
22 this schedule, if changes would have occurred,
23 would they have been noted? For example, I would
24 imagine this was sort of your planning for the
25 next few months?

1 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

2 MR. BATTISTA: If something
3 changes, is it indicated or would it not be
4 indicated?

5 HON. J. CHAREST: It's always
6 possible that it may have changed. It doesn't
7 happen very much.

8 MR. BATTISTA: I'm not suggesting
9 there was. I just ---

10 HON. J. CHAREST: No, and this ---

11 MR. BATTISTA: In terms of
12 understanding this, for example, if you had on --
13 you know, we see here Tuesday you're in Winnipeg.
14 Wednesday you're in Toronto, Thursday in Toronto,
15 and Friday in New Brunswick.

16 If a change had occurred for some
17 reason and you were called to go, you know, back
18 to Toronto or go back to Winnipeg, would that be
19 reflected somehow?

20 HON. J. CHAREST: Typically, I
21 don't -- it could happen that it would not be
22 reflected. It could but I would -- it would be
23 very rare and I'll tell you why.

24 There was a great deal of planning
25 that goes into my moving around the country, just

1 the logistics, but also the plan mainly was to get
2 people there to -- so -- and I am not -- so to
3 change something in the scheduling -- and the
4 timing is done fairly far out.

5 Now, in the leadership race, it
6 could be just up to a week out. Usually it's
7 three months out now, but in a leadership race, it
8 would be a week out. So it would not be a good
9 idea to cancel an event. It would take pretty
10 serious circumstances to cancel, and add to that
11 the fact that I don't like to cancel events.

12 I have colleagues who don't think
13 the same way, but as a person, if I make a
14 commitment to an event, I am very reluctant to
15 change it.

16 MR. ROITENBERG: When we received
17 your schedule this morning, I contemplated -- and
18 you'll be relieved to know -- decided against
19 asking you questions as to why you spent such
20 little time in Winnipeg.

21 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

22 HON. J. CHAREST: I love Winnipeg,
23 actually. It's a great spot. I didn't do too bad
24 in Winnipeg.

25 MR. ROITENBERG: On June the 13th,

1 which would have been, I assume, a fairly hectic
2 time for you ---

3 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

4 MR. ROITENBERG: --- there seems
5 to be a note or there is a note -- excuse me -- in
6 Mr. Schreiber's diary, "1:00 p.m. Charest".

7 MR. RYAN: One (1:00) p.m?

8 MR. ROITENBERG: One (1:00) p.m.
9 No note as to whether it's you or someone else
10 named Charest.

11 I take it on that day you have no
12 recollection of meeting with Mr. Schreiber?

13 HON. J. CHAREST: I did not -- I
14 do affirm that I did not meet Mr. Schreiber on
15 that day. That is a day that I remember pretty
16 well.

17 There was a lot happening. This
18 is the day of the vote and it's chaos. There was
19 a lot of emotion and everything is happening.
20 It's a very, very tense day, but at the same time,
21 had I met with Mr. Schreiber, I'm sure I would
22 have remembered about that.

23 MR. ROITENBERG: Now ---

24 HON. J. CHAREST: And it would not
25 have been appropriate to meet and there would have

1 had to have been a reason to meet Mr. Schreiber.
2 Certainly the Bear Head Project or any project
3 would not have been on my schedule on that day.
4 That's quite clear right now, in any case.

5 MR. ROITENBERG: On June the 16th,
6 1993 ---

7 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah?

8 MR. ROITENBERG: --- there's a
9 note in Mr. Schreiber's diary that says, "Jean
10 Charest, Robert Charest" and "957-2666".

11 Does that phone number ring a bell
12 for you?

13 HON. J. CHAREST: No. No. I
14 wouldn't remember telephone numbers in my office
15 back then.

16 MR. RYAN: Wouldn't?

17 HON. J. CHAREST: No.

18 MR. BATTISTA: No regional code,
19 right?

20 MR. ROITENBERG: No.

21 Do you recall having a
22 conversation or a meeting with Mr. Schreiber on
23 that day?

24 HON. J. CHAREST: No.

25 And for the record, in this period

1 of time, I am Minister of Environment, but I am
2 also undecided in regards to my future. So it
3 would be unusual for me to be conducting any kind
4 of -- I'm not conducting any kind of government
5 business in this period of time.

6 I had lost the leadership race.
7 Madame Campbell is putting together her government
8 and there are discussions going on between Madame
9 Campbell and her representatives as to my role.

10 But at that point, quite frankly,
11 and until a while, I am undecided in regards to
12 what I am actually going to do with my life at
13 that point.

14 MR. ROITENBERG: On June the 17th,
15 1993, there's a note in Mr. Schreiber's diary,
16 "7:00 a.m. Jean Charest". I take it your answer
17 would be the same as to the last inquiry. You
18 don't recall meeting ---

19 HON. J. CHAREST: Correct. No,
20 no. And I would offer the same response. At that
21 point in my life, I'm not conducting government
22 business. In fact, I'm undecided in regards to
23 what I'm going to do. I don't know whether I'm
24 going to run again or whether I'm going to accept
25 to be part of Madame Campbell's government. I'm

1 just undecided.

2 MR. ROITENBERG: Okay. On June
3 the 21st, 1993 there's a notation in Mr.
4 Schreiber's diary that says "Treffen..." -- which
5 is German for "meeting" -- "Treffen p.m.? Treffen
6 Charest?".

7 MR. RYAN: Could you spell that,
8 please?

9 MR. ROITENBERG: T-R-E-F-F-E-N.
10 On the 21st of June 1993, do you
11 recall meeting with Mr. Schreiber with or without
12 the Prime Minister?

13 HON. J. CHAREST: No, I don't.
14 On that day, my schedule indicates
15 North Hatley. That's all I -- my schedule
16 indicates that I'm in North Hatley.

17 MR. ROITENBERG: Okay. On August
18 the 9th, 1993, in the diary of Fred Doucet at 4:00
19 p.m., it indicates "Montreal - Corbeil/Charest".

20 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

21 MR. ROITENBERG: And in your
22 diary, it indicates that you were in Montreal at
23 the time.

24 HON. J. CHAREST: Correct.

25 MR. ROITENBERG: Do you recall

1 meeting with Mr. Doucet on that date to discuss
2 the Bear Head Project or anything else?

3 HON. J. CHAREST: No, I don't. My
4 schedule -- mine indicates "Montreal" and "Laval"
5 which seems to be in the second part of the day.
6 That's all it indicates. I don't remember meeting
7 Mr. Doucet.

8 MR. ROITENBERG: In answer to Mr.
9 Wolson's query earlier as to the nature of your
10 relationship with Mr. Doucet and the fact that you
11 know Mr. Doucet, do you recall ever meeting with
12 Mr. Doucet on the issue of the Thyssen Bear Head
13 Project?

14 HON. J. CHAREST: The -- your
15 documents indicate a meeting on August -- what is
16 it, August 26th?

17 MR. ROITENBERG: August 26th.

18 HON. J. CHAREST: I have no reason
19 to believe that meeting did not happen. He may
20 have raised it in other circumstances with me.
21 But I don't -- frankly and honestly, I don't
22 remember.

23 And if he had, he's a lobbyist
24 representing someone who wants a project to go
25 through. And at the end of the day, if the

1 project is going to get government support, it
2 will get support because it will receive some
3 analysis from the departments that are involved
4 and because it's worthy of support.

5 So whether he crossed my path and
6 raises it as, "This project is a good project and
7 I think you should support it," it may have
8 happened, but I don't -- again, in all honesty, I
9 don't remember that happening.

10 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Perhaps I could
11 ask this question, sir.

12 Richard Wolson again.

13 Was there a protocol for a
14 minister meeting with a lobbyist or was there a
15 rule that one had as to how to conduct yourself
16 with a lobbyist, just generally speaking?

17 HON. J. CHAREST: There's no --
18 there's no assigned protocol.

19 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Right.

20 HON. J. CHAREST: It's a question
21 of judgment.

22 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Right.

23 And what was sort of the policy
24 that you adopted in that regard?

25 HON. J. CHAREST: To listen ---

1 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Yes.

2 HON. J. CHAREST: --- and to then
3 ask advice from my department or departments,
4 wherever I had been.

5 And if someone is pushing the
6 project and defending it, well then you analyze
7 the project and have it analyzed and determine
8 whether or not in the end it's worthy of support
9 and whether it's recommended and supported by the
10 department, but that is only done after some
11 rigorous analysis.

12 Generally, we try to avoid the
13 lobbyists. You know, I'm speaking to you in terms
14 of -- it's not something that we -- we don't seek
15 them out and some of us try to evade it. And we
16 try to minimize the meetings with representatives
17 or lobbyists because we don't want to create
18 expectations or create a situation where they are
19 creating expectations for their clients.

20 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Would a
21 lobbyist generally meet with someone in a
22 different position than a Minister or a Prime
23 Minister, someone departmentally?

24 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes, sure,
25 either at the political level or at the

1 departmental level.

2 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Would it be
3 difficult for a lobbyist to get to either, a) a
4 Minister or b) a Prime Minister?

5 HON. J. CHAREST: It depends. A
6 Prime Minister, I can't say ---

7 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Yes.

8 HON. J. CHAREST: --- honestly,
9 because I don't know. In the case of a Prime
10 Minister of Canada, I just simply don't know.

11 In the case of a Minister, it
12 depends. It may depend on each Minister. In my
13 case, it would not be an easy thing in which
14 someone could get through directly, as a lobbyist.
15 It would not be encouraged, and it would not be
16 encouraged by me or by my staff.

17 In certain cases, it will happen
18 because it's someone we know and they want to make
19 their case, well fine.

20 In this case, I found it revealing
21 that there obviously was a request by Mr. Doucet
22 to come and make his case. But after that, the
23 Department followed through on the analysis that
24 they did, came up with the recommendations that
25 were then implemented. And that's the way the

1 system works and from my experience.

2 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: And you have
3 indicated that you weren't familiar with
4 Schreiber. Bear Head only because you've now read
5 about it and it's refreshed your memory.

6 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

7 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: What about
8 Thyssen; is that a company with whom you were
9 familiar?

10 HON. J. CHAREST: No.

11 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: No?

12 HON. J. CHAREST: No. I know --
13 and you know, speaking to you today also, I've
14 read and I've seen a lot of this in the last few
15 years because of the amount of attention this
16 whole story has received. So I want to be careful
17 and not mix my recent memory ---

18 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Sure.

19 HON. J. CHAREST: --- of events
20 with the facts. Now, we are back in 1993. This
21 is a while ago. Back then, we didn't know about
22 Thyssen or Bear Head. Frankly, I don't remember
23 it being an issue that was raised with me.

24 When it went through the
25 Department, it received from what I can read in

1 your documents the treatment it should have
2 received, analysis, conclusions, and then it was
3 moved on.

4 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: And one last
5 question from me: At around the time of the
6 leadership race and then a general election, would
7 a project like this project be significant because
8 it could perhaps produce jobs in Montreal, which
9 I'm assuming is something that every Minister or
10 Prime Minister, hopeful Prime Minister would want
11 to do?

12 HON. J. CHAREST: It would be the
13 contrary for this reason. It would be viewed with
14 suspicion.

15 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Okay.

16 HON. J. CHAREST: Going into an
17 election campaign; coming into an election
18 campaign, either on the eve or during the election
19 campaign, to announce this kind of a project would
20 not be something that I would encourage because it
21 would be viewed with suspicion, and it would be
22 viewed as a political ploy and it would not be
23 credible.

24 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Okay.

25 HON. J. CHAREST: So I would -- I

1 can tell you from everything I -- I've been
2 through a few campaigns, one recently, and that's
3 always been my attitude. When a campaign happens,
4 it's better to avoid these announcements. They
5 happen, but there has to be reasons.

6 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Okay.

7 HON. J. CHAREST: Either because
8 of timing or the promoter or the person who is
9 doing the project needs an answer for logic
10 reasons or -- you know, that's neither here or
11 there.

12 Generally, I don't encourage that,
13 no.

14 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Thank you, sir.

15 MR. ROITENBERG: But you can
16 appreciate how other people might be of a
17 different ---

18 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

19 MR. ROITENBERG: --- political
20 mindset and try to make some hay at the time of an
21 election?

22 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes. Some
23 people -- some people may think it is a good idea
24 in politics to make a big splash, an announcement,
25 either during a campaign or just before we enter a

1 project. I am of another view.

2 And, for example, in the case of
3 Mr. Corbeil, you can see where the Government of
4 Quebec is involved in this. I read between the
5 lines. The Government of Quebec isn't sending any
6 positive -- there may be other documents -- I
7 don't see any outward indications of support by
8 the Government of Quebec in the documents that
9 you've passed on to me.

10 And Minister Corbeil would have an
11 interest because for two reasons; it's Montreal,
12 and it seems to be -- they seem to want to direct
13 the location of the project to the eastern part of
14 the island where his riding is. That's fine.

15 And he would, you know, legitimate
16 -- it would not -- it would be by the way normal
17 for him to be out there talking up the project or
18 trying to advance it, if it produces jobs in this
19 area. That's the normal course of business.

20 But then I look at the concluding
21 documents and both he and I, according to the
22 records of the Department, come to the conclusion
23 that this project is not worthy of support. He
24 passed it on to DND. I guess it looks like a
25 facesaver at that point, passing it on to DND and

1 saying "Will you test the truck?" and DND gives
2 their response saying, "Yes, but at a cost
3 recovery basis."

4 So not a very enthusiastic
5 response.

6 MR. ROITENBERG: Sure. If I can
7 just go back to the diaries and we'll be done with
8 them in just a moment.

9 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes, please. Go
10 ahead.

11 MR. ROITENBERG: In August the 20th
12 of 1993, in the daytimer for Fred Doucet.

13 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

14 MR. ROITENBERG: At 11:30 a.m., it
15 indicates "Corbeil's call".

16 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

17 MR. ROITENBERG: I take it you
18 would be unaware as to whether or not Mr. Doucet
19 was having phone calls on that day with Minister
20 Corbeil regarding this project?

21 HON. J. CHAREST: I'm not aware of
22 that.

23 MR. RYAN: For the record again,
24 two things; will you -- because you are asking
25 questions which derive from the documents. If I

1 could be shown a copy; would you object to that?
2 That's question A.

3 And B, do these extracts
4 specifically refer to the project or just generic?

5 MR. ROITENBERG: Just generic. I
6 am reading to you what it says in my diary.

7 MR. RYAN: Okay, great. Because
8 I'm unclear as to what it says exactly. I may not
9 be.

10 MR. ROITENBERG: And Mr. Ryan, if
11 you wish, I have the copies here.

12 MR. RYAN: Okay.

13 MR. ROITENBERG: And I can
14 certainly show you whichever you wish.

15 MR. RYAN: Thank you.

16 MR. ROITENBERG: On August the
17 25th, 1993, in the diary of Karlheinz Schreiber, it
18 says:

19 "9575657 Charest, Judy-Ann
20 Johnson 15:30."

21 MR. RYAN: Judy-Ann?

22 MR. ROITENBERG: Judy, J-U-D-Y, A-
23 N-N; Johnson without a "t".

24 Is Judy-Ann Johnson somebody you
25 recall from your staff?

1 HON. J. CHAREST: I believe Judy-
2 Ann Johnson worked for me, yes, from staff.

3 MR. ROITENBERG: The phone number,
4 does that ring a bell?

5 HON. J. CHAREST: No, but I will
6 check to the office and then we'll ---

7 MR. ROITENBERG: Okay.

8 MR. RYAN: Yes, we'll discuss as
9 to what kind of verifications could be made with
10 these; certainly, be accommodating.

11 MR. ROITENBERG: Thank you.

12 Do you have any recollection as to
13 speaking with Mr. Schreiber or anybody regarding
14 this project on that day?

15 HON. J. CHAREST: No.

16 MR. ROITENBERG: Now, in fairness,
17 this is the day before ---

18 HON. J. CHAREST: Yeah.

19 MR. ROITENBERG: --- the August
20 26th meeting.

21 HON. J. CHAREST: Correct, yes, I
22 noted that.

23 MR. ROITENBERG: But certainly at
24 least we are able now to confirm that Judy-Ann
25 Johnson is a name that ---

1 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

2 MR. ROITENBERG: --- may have been
3 involved with your office?

4 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

5 MR. RYAN: In other words, what
6 you are suggesting is that it could be just a
7 confirmation of something that ---

8 MR. ROITENBERG: It could very
9 well be but ---

10 MR. RYAN: We don't know.

11 MR. ROITENBERG: --- we don't
12 know.

13 MR. RYAN: Perfect.

14 MR. ROITENBERG: During your
15 course of serving as a Minister, were you ever
16 encouraged or requested by another minister or one
17 of the Prime Minister's to whom you served to take
18 interest in a particular project; would that have
19 occurred?

20 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes, sure.

21 MR. ROITENBERG: Do you recall as
22 it pertained to Bear Head Thyssen being asked by
23 either of the Prime Ministers to whom you served
24 to look at this file, participate in this file or
25 meet with any of the parties?

1 HON. J. CHAREST: No, I don't.
2 Neither Mr. Mulroney, neither do I remember a
3 request by Madame Campbell, by any Prime
4 Ministers.

5 MR. ROITENBERG: If something like
6 that had occurred, does it occur on an informal
7 basis or is there something in writing or is it
8 something discussed around the Cabinet table, from
9 your experience?

10 HON. J. CHAREST: It could happen
11 in all three circumstances. It just may happen --
12 it really depends on the circumstances.

13 The Cabinet table is usually
14 around an agenda, as the Cabinet Committee meeting
15 is. There can be a part of the meeting or usually
16 typically a part of the meeting is about political
17 discussions.

18 But on specific files, it would be
19 more typical to -- it being raised formally; it
20 could be raised informally around the meetings
21 saying "Can we look into this? or "Look into
22 that".

23 And it could be a note. You know,
24 all three scenarios are possible.

25 MR. ROITENBERG: And you recall

1 nothing of the like occurring in relation to Bear
2 Head?

3 HON. J. CHAREST: No. No, and
4 frankly had Madame Campbell or Mr. Mulroney raised
5 it, there are good chances I would remember.

6 I do remember files, one file in
7 particular that Mr. Mulroney raised with me and it
8 has nothing to do with this, but if the Prime
9 Minister raises a file with you ---

10 MR. ROITENBERG: You recall?

11 HON. J. CHAREST: --- usually we pay
12 attention. It's a good idea to pay attention, if
13 you're a minister. At least I think that's true from
14 my experience.

15 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

16 MR. ROITENBERG: You would hope!

17 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

18 MR. ROITENBERG: During the course
19 of your leadership campaign, Robert Charest, ---

20 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

21 MR. ROITENBERG: --- your brother
22 was involved in your campaign?

23 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

24 MR. ROITENBERG: In what capacity?

25 HON. J. CHAREST: Robert helped

1 out in controlling the expenditures of the
2 campaign. He was mostly involved on that side of
3 the campaign.

4 MR. ROITENBERG: I take it if he
5 were meeting with any individuals, he wouldn't
6 necessarily report that to you?

7 HON. J. CHAREST: No, he -- well,
8 unless there was a reason, unless there was something.
9 Of course, he may be referring to the fact that he met
10 with Mr. Schreiber which he confirmed. And he met
11 with, on the invitation of Elmer McKay, who I
12 understand is a friend of Mr. Schreiber's or at least
13 someone he knows well and Mr. Schreiber gave him money
14 for the campaign.

15 But my brother at the time was not
16 involved on the fundraising side of the campaign. He
17 was involved more on the side of controlling the
18 expenses of the campaign.

19 MR. ROITENBERG: Which I take it is a
20 crucial role in a campaign?

21 HON. J. CHAREST: Oh yes, it is.
22 It's an important role. These campaigns have a
23 tendency to cost a lot of money and controlling
24 expenditures is part of what-- he didn't do that alone,
25 mind you, he wasn't the person in charge of that.

1 There is a whole team of people who had
2 responsibilities with regard to either fundraising or
3 controlling the expenditures, organising, it was a
4 whole team.

5 MR. BATTISTA: Who would have been
6 responsible -- Giuseppe Battista for the question --
7 who would have been responsible for the fundraising at
8 the time?

9 HON. J. CHAREST: George McLaren.

10 MR. BATTISTA: Okay. From a
11 procedural perspective, your brother was responsible
12 for the finances. A person says, "I want to make a
13 contribution." What would he have done, what should
14 have been done or what would the processes have been?

15 HON. J. CHAREST: Well ---

16 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: You don't want the
17 comment ---

18 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: I don't think ---

19 MR. BATTISTA: Okay. All right.

20 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: So could we
21 withdraw the question?

22 MR. BATTISTA: Yes, I withdraw it
23 then.

24 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: From the record,
25 it is withdrawn.

1 Do you any other questions Mr.
2 Battista?

3 MR. BATTISTA: No.

4 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Just a couple of
5 questions, if you will, sir. Richard Wolson, again,
6 for the monitor.

7 Your relationship with Mr. Mulroney,
8 you would, I take it, describe as a very good one,
9 close one?

10 HON. J. CHAREST: He's a friend, yes.

11 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: All right.

12 HON. J. CHAREST: Has been a friend
13 for a number of years.

14 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: All right. And did
15 you work closely with him when you were a Minister?

16 HON. J. CHAREST: I had a
17 relationship that was a typical of the relationship
18 that a Minister has with the Prime Minister and there's
19 usually a certain distance.

20 MR. WOLSON, Q.C.: Okay.

21 HON. J. CHAREST: And I was, you
22 know, I was Minister of State when I started and then I
23 became Minister of the Environment but I wasn't in the
24 first tier. I'll give you an example of ranking, how
25 we ---

1 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Sure.

2 HON. J. CHAREST: --- how we ranked.
3 When the government was structured in such a way when
4 it was the Operations Committee, did that on a weekly
5 basis, I would describe Ministers sitting around table
6 as being in the top tier.

7 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: All right.

8 HON. J. CHAREST: And I was at the
9 P&P, Planning and Priorities, we met every week within
10 that group, so we're the second. So that's, you know,
11 one way, I guess, of ascertaining the ranking.

12 And the relationship I had with Mr.
13 Mulroney was that of a Minister with his Prime
14 Minister. And mind you, I was not part of the
15 entourage that came in with him in 1984. In fact I
16 worked against him, I worked for Mr. Clark.

17 And after that, you know, he trusted
18 me, named me minister and I worked under his government
19 and was quite happy with that and we've become friends.

20 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: All right. And in
21 terms of a question that my colleague, Mr. Roitenberg
22 asked you; if he had come to you, either in his last
23 days in office or had come to you when he had left
24 office and asked you to see someone on his behalf, or
25 perhaps give another look to a project that might have

1 occurred during his time, that's something today you
2 would likely remember?

3 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

4 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: So you can say, I
5 take it, then, that, with regard to the project that
6 we're interested in, the Bear Head Project, that that
7 never occurred?

8 HON. J. CHAREST: That never occurred
9 and he did not raise it.

10 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: All right. What
11 about your -- Madame Campbell? Do you recall whether
12 it was raised by her to you?

13 HON. J. CHAREST: No, I never
14 remember Madame Campbell raising this with me.

15 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Okay. So you can
16 say that it never occurred?

17 HON. J. CHAREST: No. I'm quite
18 sure. I don't remember either Madame Campbell or Mr.
19 Mulroney raising this with me, and had they raised it
20 with me, I believe I would have remembered.

21 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Sure. And ---

22 HON. J. CHAREST: Given who they
23 were.

24 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: --- in terms of
25 your actual work on the project, the documents speak

1 for themselves although you have no independent
2 recollection?

3 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

4 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Would that be a
5 fair statement?

6 HON. J. CHAREST: I think so. And I
7 would add, you know, even if the Prime Minister, either
8 Prime Ministers Campbell or Mulroney had raised this
9 issue, it would have gone through the same process.
10 That they had been in an office or out of office and
11 the process being one where the department would
12 analyse the worthiness of the project and make
13 recommendations. And once they've made that
14 recommendation which calls on expertise that I don't
15 have, I don't have access to a market analysis.

16 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Right.

17 HON. J. CHAREST: I would be -- there
18 would be no reason for me, I don't see any reason why I
19 would seek to contradict that. And that's my
20 understanding of this file, all of this, of course.

21 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: And one very last
22 question, because I know that you have a commitment.

23 MR. RYAN: But don't worry, we have
24 time if there are more questions.

25 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Mr. Schreiber, the

1 Schreiber that I've met is a pretty colourful fellow.

2 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

3 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: And he does make an
4 impression when you meet him, and I would think that
5 that would be his case in history as well. Having seen
6 him, certainly in the media, and you acknowledged that.

7 HON. J. CHAREST: Yes.

8 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: It doesn't ring a
9 bell at all that you may have met -- maybe not, maybe
10 you can't recall the circumstances, but that you had
11 met this colourful fellow.

12 HON. J. CHAREST: It is quite
13 possible that I would have met him, that he would have
14 been introduced to me by someone. That's -- and during
15 the leadership race, I was moving around a lot.

16 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Sure.

17 HON. J. CHAREST: People came in and
18 I would recall saying someone was supporting us, and
19 say hello.

20 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Sure.

21 HON. J. CHAREST: That's possible;
22 that certainly is possible.

23 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: All right.

24 HON. J. CHAREST: It's just that I
25 don't remember. And again, I want to say that I've

1 seen a lot of Mr. Schreiber as we all have.

2 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Of course.

3 HON. J. CHAREST: So it's difficult
4 today to tell you, well, I've never met him before.
5 I've seen him a lot recently so did he come by with
6 someone, was introduced? Quite possibly, but in the
7 end, in regards to his project, the documents here
8 pretty much reflect. What I see is pretty typical of
9 someone who is pushing for a project to go through,
10 negotiate the hoops and they meet the political staff
11 and then we come to a conclusion and that's the way a
12 file is closed.

13 MR. WOLSON, Q.C: Thank you, sir.

14 MR. ROITENBERG: Thank you very much
15 for being with us.

16 HON. J. CHAREST: Thank you. Good
17 luck in your work.

18 MR. ROITENBERG: Thank you.

19 --- Upon adjourning at 12:25 p.m.

20 --- L'audience est ajournée à 12h45.

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Barry E. Prouse, a certified court reporter in the Province of Ontario, hereby certify the foregoing pages to be an accurate transcription of my notes/records to the best of my skill and ability, and I so swear.

Je, Barry E. Prouse, un sténographe officiel dans la province de l'Ontario, certifie que les pages ci-hautes sont une transcription conforme de mes notes/enregistrements au meilleur de mes capacités, et je le jure.



Barry E. Prouse, CVR-CM