

Jan. 6, 2006

Andy Scott  
Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs  
2100-10 Wellington St.  
Gatineau, PQ

Mr. Harper  
Leader of the Official Opposition  
409-S Centre Block  
Parliament Hill

Mr. Harper,

Your photo op on Jan. 3 in Quebec City was misleading. You stood beside a briefcase that contained, allegedly, \$132,000 and opened a file folder containing nothing that, you said, was what Canadians got in return for a contract let by my department. You went on to suggest that the contract concerned public opinion research or public opinion polling.

These allegations are false. I hope you will do the honourable thing and retract them as well as remove or edit the offending news release that remains on the Conservative party's web site.

The contract had nothing to do with public opinion research or polling. It was about personnel relations in the audit and evaluation branch of my department. Your misrepresentation of the matter will have a negative effect on the public service by discouraging public servants from seeking innovative solutions for fear of ending up as fodder in partisan politics. It is quite simply irresponsible.

I have taken the liberty to enclose a copy of the material that was released last fall under the Access to Information Act. May I suggest that you put it in your empty file folder.

Thank you for your attention,

Hon. Andy Scott.