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More Debate Over Cameron Inquiry
 June 19, 2008

The Liberal Opposition House Leader and Justice Critic Kelvin Parsons says the attacks on the Cameron Inquiry by Premier Williams and Justice Minister Kennedy are absolutely inappropriate. Yesterday the justice minister raised more concerns about the legal fees being charged by the Commission's lawyers. Parsons says its hard to determine what message the criticism is sending. Parsons says the Inquiry is doing what it was meant to do and he says the government doesn't like the approach. He says the money issue is being used by the government to stymie the commission or perhaps influence the outcome. Parsons says the amount being billed by the lawyers at the inquiry is not unusual for attorneys of their stature.

New Democrat Leader Lorraine Michael is also calling on the government to stop meddling in the inquiry.

Justice Minister Jerome Kennedy says government is just doing its duty bringing the cost of the Cameron Inquiry to the public's attention. Jerome Kennedy says the legal fees appear to be exorbitant. Kennedy says during the month of March, Sandra Chaytor's law firm billed \$93-thousand dollars, Bernard Coffey's firm billed \$67-thousand dollars for a total of \$160-thousand dollars for one month. He says by any stretch of the imagination that is certainly extensive if not exorbitant. Kennedy says the questions about the inquiry costs are valid. He says on May 8th. Justice Cameron requested the extension. He says at that point there were 80 witnesses left to call and at this point there are still 65 left. Kennedy says then the other parties have the right to call witnesses. He says all they are trying to do is determine the cost of the inquiry and that is legitimate. Kennedy says in a letter to the Commissioner Tuesday he indicated the deputy minister of justice and finance officials could meet with Inquiry officials as early as today to discuss the budget.

A St John's lawyer is calling the lawyer's fees associated with the Cameron Inquiry outrageous. Steve Marshall is a private lawyer who has practiced for 25 years. Marshall says he wants to know, as a taxpayer, what the total tally will be. He says the key issue is what's in the best interest of the patients affected by the botched breast cancer hormone receptor tests.

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