

Oral Questions

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. lady asks about a betrayal of trust, and she alleges use of the power of the state. These are serious allegations. They are not founded on fact. They are pure inventions. I have stated quite clearly, and our office has stated quite clearly, that we have a clipping file. The hon. lady herself says she has a file on me personally. I hope she will make that public, except perhaps the personal correspondence that we might have had together.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Where is the betrayal of trust? The hon. lady has done this with public moneys. She has done it with people who are paid by the public purse. The files of the Leader of the Opposition, which he will not show to the press, contrary to ours which we have, are accumulated with what money? Some multinational corporations gave him money to do that? No, Sir, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition has a research bureau which receives more than half a million dollars a year. As Party Leader, he receives more than \$1 million a year just for his staff. Is this using the power of the state because it is taxpayers' money? If it is, then the accusation stands against both of us; we both stand condemned.

Mr. Deans: Out! Out!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Let them applaud when I say the three of us stand condemned. The Leader of the New Democratic Party, as Party Leader, receives over half a million dollars a year, and the NDP research bureau receives more than a quarter of a million dollars a year.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: What do you receive?

Mr. Trudeau: They ask what I receive. The two Opposition parties' research bureaux put together receive more than the Liberal caucus research bureau.

More than ten years ago, in order to improve the quality of questioning in this House—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau:—in order to permit the Opposition to do its job and to counter the advantage the Government has because it has the Public Service of Canada working for the Government of Canada—that is the way the system operates—we took the innovative step of funding the research bureaux for the Opposition Leaders' offices. If they have used these moneys to colligate files on myself which are unshowable they are so base in their content, then that is their responsibility, not ours.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST FOR NAMES OF PERSONS INVOLVED IN OPERATION

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will sink to any depths.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Miss MacDonald: What is at issue here is that the Prime Minister and his staff were out to dredge up material that they hoped would discredit the Leader of the Opposition, and their scheme failed. The Minister of Finance is the living proof that their scheme failed.

We now learn that there were ten people involved in this operation, at public expense. Will the Prime Minister say who they were, who authorized them, and will he, in the name of all that is decent, assure this House and the country that the Office of the Prime Minister will no longer be used in this shameful way? If he won't give that assurance, then he should resign.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member wants me to give the assurance that it will not be used again in this way. I cannot give that assurance. It has never been used in this way. We have not looked into private lives. We have a clipping service. That is what we have.

● (1430)

Mr. Crosbie: Searching titles?

Mr. Trudeau: The Hon. Member mentioned searching titles. The Deputy Prime Minister yesterday dealt with that.

An Hon. Member: No, he did not.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: Who owns your house?

Mr. Trudeau: The Hon. Member wants to know who owns my house. He just has to read *The Gazette* and many other papers. They have researched the public records in Canada about my house in Montreal.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): At whose expense?

Mr. Trudeau: At whose expense? At their own expense, of course. That is what happened in the case of the Leader of the Opposition's house. I understand that somebody in my office read in *The Gazette*, a Montreal paper, that the Leader of the Opposition had bought his house for \$1, and that he had sold it back for \$1.

An Hon. Member: To whom?

Mr. Trudeau: I do not know.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: The story was in the *Montreal Gazette*.

An Hon. Member: We want to know how it was done.