

*Oral Questions*

In addition to that, I provided, through the budget, that the loss of the revenue guarantee would be offset to a great extent by revenue flows to the provinces as a result of the tax changes.

**Mr. Rae:** The minister is carrying on as though the economy were not in a recession. It is unbelievable that the minister would persist in his plans to reduce the over-all federal commitment to social spending and to social investment at a time when we are in a recession which, according to all the figures and indications, is becoming worse.

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**BANKS AND BANKING**

## INQUIRY RESPECTING EXCESS PROFITS

**Mr. Bob Rae (Broadview-Greenwood):** Madam Speaker, my final supplementary question is addressed to the Minister of Finance and is concerning bank profits. The minister gave statements to the House on June 12, 1980; March 13, 1981; April 9, 1981; May 29, 1981; December 2, 1981; and December 7, 1981, in which he indicated that he was still considering the question of whether or not an excess profits tax would be appropriate. The minister wants to make the banks bleed. It is clear that he intends to gum them to death, and that is the only way in which he is doing it. Does the minister not think the gumming has gone on long enough, and that it is time to take action with respect to excess profits of the banks?

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member has asked three questions and has described them as supplementary questions. I wonder how one can ask a supplementary question when one's first question is on tax changes—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. MacEachen:**—one's second question is on fiscal arrangements, and the third question is on bank profits. To what are they supplementary? Are they supplementary to the gumming which this hon. member has been practising as a profession for the last several months?

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● (1430)

[Translation]

**REFERENDUMS**POSSIBILITY OF CONSULTING QUEBECERS ON DESIRE TO  
REMAIN CANADIAN

**Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Hull):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Following a number of more or less obscure and convoluted statements by the leader of the

separatist government in Quebec, concerning the same old, rather unrealistic, question of sovereignty or sovereignty with association, French Canadians living in their formerly "belle" province are now totally confused and they are suffering from acute anxiety and are extremely concerned about their own future and especially their children's. Can the Prime Minister inform the House whether the federal government intends to consider the possibility of asking the citizens of Quebec, once and for all, and by whatever means, whether or not they, in the free exercise of their democratic rights, wish to separate from the rest of a country as free, as vast, as peaceful and as prosperous as Canada is?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, the proposal is, of course, worth considering, but it seems to me that, to a considerable extent, the people of Quebec gave their answer when they replied to an ambiguous question put to them in May, 1980, and the majority made it clear that they did not even want to discuss the possibility of sovereignty associated with something else. We all know that the Parti Québécois did not consider the will of the people of Quebec at that time, and therefore I am not so sure that, if the people of Quebec express their views in the way suggested by the hon. member, these views will be respected any more than they were after the last referendum.

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[English]

**NATIONAL SECURITY**

## INVESTIGATIONS IN QUEBEC

**Hon. Allan Lawrence (Durham-Northumberland):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. It also relates to a situation within the province of Quebec, specifically the whole question of the security service investigations in that province involving the Parti Québécois and Quebec cabinet ministers. A Canadian Press wire story is appearing across the country today in which the Solicitor General of Canada has some statements attributed to him. They are quite short, Madam Speaker. I quote:

—any political information discovered by the RCMP during the course of it—

The word "it" refers to the investigation. The sentence continues:

—will not be passed on to the federal government—

This is reiterated in the final paragraph in this story which reads:

If the RCMP happened to uncover any political secrets, it would not pass them on to the government.

Will the Prime Minister tell this House who will be making that judgment as to whether it is a political secret or not? Will it be the RCMP or will it be a member of the ministry of the federal government?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, I have not had the advantage which the hon. member