

We have learned in passing days that the Government had access to knowledge of two separate occasions of leaks, one admitted to by the Minister yesterday in his comments to the House when he said that one was investigated right from the start, and the second that the Deputy Minister knew as well. Once the Government knew that the first leak described as a criminal act would no longer act as a defence for the other two leaks, why did the Government not tell the House about the other two leaks and why then did the Minister of Finance not resign in the traditional manner?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, what has to be kept in perspective is the difference between leaks and allegations. The leak was quite obvious. Everyone saw it on television. The rest are mere allegations. There have been allegations floating across the House, reported in the press, all of which are being investigated in a very broad and comprehensive investigation by the RCMP.

We are witnessing here nothing but a charade. Last week they called for the resignation of the Minister of the Environment, the Minister of National Revenue, the Minister of State for Transport and the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Today they are calling for the resignation of the Minister of Finance. Well, they are not going to get it.

Mr. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, we may indeed ask for the resignation of the Minister of Finance, but considering the nature of this Government, we know that we will not get it. It does not even understand accountability to the House.

SECOND LEAK—KNOWLEDGE OF DEPUTY MINISTER OF FINANCE

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. The Deputy Minister of Finance knew of a second leak. If he did not tell the Minister, why was he fired? It is admitted. If that is incorrect, then bring the Deputy Minister to the bar of this House and we can get to the bottom of this deal. Bring him to the bar. I ask the Minister to deny absolutely that the Government, the Minister and the Solicitor General did not know there was a second leak until yesterday.

Oral Questions

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I have already answered that question. The Hon. Member may want to consult with his Leader.

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TRANSPORT

VIA RAIL—EFFECTS OF CUTS ON ATLANTIC CANADA

Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport and it is with regard to VIA Rail. It is a fact that certain rural and isolated areas in Canada will be spared the axe when cuts, if and when they are made to VIA, arrive. In light of this, my question has to do with Atlantic Canada and specifically the Province of New Brunswick. Being a very isolated community with regional development problems, I believe that we need VIA Rail. I want some assurance from the Minister that there will be a commitment to maintain the service.

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to presume that any routes will be closed by VIA Rail. We will see what will be the proposal—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Bouchard (Roberval): Settle down a little bit. We will wait for the report by VIA Rail. Second, I do not give any assurances that routes will not be closed. I will wait for the decision, but my friend knows very well that with the money we have, we cannot afford to put \$650 million a year into it and we will not. Depending on the reference levels we have given to VIA Rail, decisions will be made and will be applied.

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THE BUDGET

RCMP INVESTIGATION—KNOWLEDGE OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. The Solicitor General tells the House that no one profited from this supposed second leak. Yet this seems to be in direct contrast to what the RCMP said yesterday. Spokesman Pierre Bélanger is quoted in *The Ottawa Citizen* as saying: