

*Oral Questions*

It is also clear from other people's remarks that the Minister of Finance, some weeks ago, knew of it and had access to it. Who else is involved in this matter of abuse in the Prime Minister's office? How many more? Are the political Ministers involved? Has the Prime Minister knowledge of it?

**Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi):** Have you stopped beating your wife yet, David?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking about two persons who were accused in *The Globe and Mail* this morning of conducting a covert intelligence operation. We know what those words mean. I have explained the circumstances in each case as truthfully as I could find out in the limited time available this morning. I know of no other facts that I should give to the Hon. Member. If another fact comes to my attention, I will bring it to his attention and that of the House. But I am giving the facts as I know them, both in the case of Mr. Crenna and in the case of Mr. Cadieux.

It seems to me that when we have said "look at the file" put together by Mr. Cadieux, we have told the press to look at it, that is a pretty clear indication there is not very much covert about it, that one wanted to conceal, and nothing about the personal life of the Leader of the Opposition. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I would condemn as being totally without justification any such investigation by the Government into the private life of any Member of Parliament. That is for the police if they want to do it, but not for us.

**Mr. Crombie:** Mr. Speaker, I think the Acting Prime Minister, indeed all Canadians, would understand that when we read the paper this morning we clearly had in mind the abuse demonstrated in this House by the Minister of Finance. That is why we attach far more importance to it than the Acting Prime Minister.

## REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER CONDUCT INQUIRY

**Hon. David Crombie (Rosedale):** Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister to consider this. We understand there was a limited time to investigate, and we understand that the Acting Prime Minister can confirm for us only two of the four persons named in the paper. However, Tom Axworthy, the principal secretary to the Prime Minister, is alleged to have been involved, as well as others. What we want to know, I think what everyone wants to know, is who else is involved, how long will it go on, and who else is going to be touched?

Will the Acting Prime Minister undertake to this House today to meet with the Prime Minister on his return and ask him to carry out a full-scale inquiry, so that the matter can be dealt with openly and cleanly? At stake are not only the Acting Prime Minister and this Government, but the sanctity and importance of this House.

● (1440)

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, if the

conduct in itself were reprehensible, it would be important to find out whether there were other persons involved. I do not find anything reprehensible about seeking information on public issues and about the stand of public figures on public questions. That is all that has happened here. It has arisen from a very important industrial relations case, a very important shutdown in which the Leader of the Opposition was involved and to which he drew attention himself. It seems to me it was our responsibility to be fully informed on that event. That is all. Why ask who else is involved? If there were three or six others, would it add anything to an act which in itself is innocent and fully justified?

## POSITION OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

**Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. The Deputy Prime Minister would like to dispose of this issue by saying it is not reprehensible. A few days ago, after the Minister of Finance could not produce a specific letter, he tried to back it up by saying he had heard of a conversation with the Deputy Minister of Finance. We have had a plethora of examples in the House whereby the Government is using various means to hang on to power and to bring others in the House down to its level.

Does the Deputy Prime Minister not feel that this action, in connection with the other actions that have been exposed in the House, in fact degrades the Government, the House, and the very institutions we are to uphold in the eyes of Canadians?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, we are speaking about a particular case which has been brought up in the press this morning and has now been raised quite legitimately by members of the Opposition. I have explained what has happened in each case, to the best of my knowledge. I do not find anything degrading about going into a public office to seek information, nor do I find anything degrading about doing research, principally in the library of the University of Ottawa, to get information on a public event. I do not see anything degrading about that. Maybe the Hon. Member does, but I do not.

**Mr. Epp:** Mr. Speaker, since the Deputy Prime Minister feels that it is so minor, it is interesting to note that it was the principal secretary in the Prime Minister's Office who thought it was important enough to develop this kind of activity.

## INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO RESEARCH ASSISTANT

**Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher):** Mr. Speaker, if this was so minor, inconsequential, and of such little importance, why was Mr. Cadieux told to operate in private, not to be associated with the Prime Minister, not to have any linkages with the phones, not to have any office space in the Prime Minister's office, but to get the information?