

Oral Questions

Over the weekend, however, members of the financial community have confirmed, by example after example, the ways in which individuals could have profited from information contained in the leaked Budget.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister now acknowledge that in deciding to proceed with the Budget on April 27 the Government did so in the full awareness that some Canadians were in a position to profit from advance knowledge of the Budget's contents, the very thing that the principle of budget secrecy is supposed to prevent?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, that is part of the ongoing investigation as well. As the Solicitor General has suggested, whenever he has been able to bring information to the House, he has. Members opposite suggest—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mazankowski: Members opposite do not like what I say. They want their own little answers to their own little questions.

Ms. Clancy: We want the truth.

Mr. Mazankowski: This is a political partisan agenda for them. They do not want the facts.

The Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition is trying to settle an old score here. The Minister of Finance called his bluff during the election campaign. He is still smarting from it. He cannot get over it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ALLEGATION THAT OPPORTUNITY FOR PROFIT WAS
IGNORED

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Etobicoke North): Mr. Speaker, on the afternoon of April 27 the decision was taken by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance to proceed with the tabling of the Budget in the full knowledge that both corporations and individuals—

Mr. Lewis: It was tabled the night before.

Mr. MacLaren: —had in their possession for two days or more the *Budget in Brief*. This was nothing to do with an RCMP investigation. It was a decision of the Ministers involved.

On what grounds was it decided that the many risks of profiteering would be given no priority in the decision to proceed with the Budget?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member knows that the Budget was unveiled to the Canadian public the night of April 26. That was a *de facto* release of the Budget. As a matter of fact, everybody knew that. As a matter of fact, the Opposition called the formalized tabling of the Budget in the House of Commons a non-event and walked out. They did not consider that to be a relevant issue.

What was relevant was the release of the Budget on April 26 at 10 p.m. or 10.30 p.m. That is when the Budget took effect.

MUTUAL LIFE LEAK SUBJECT OF RCMP INVESTIGATION

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, on April 27, at 1.30 in the afternoon, Mr. Masterson of Mutual Life phoned the RCMP and established the fact that he had budget information leaked to his office. He also phoned the Government and said that he had budget information leaked to his company. That was not an allegation but a fact.

Why was Mr. Masterson's call not reported to the House of Commons rather than hidden behind an allegation that it is going to be investigated by the RCMP?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether the Hon. Member is hard of hearing or not, but that question has been answered many times.

ALLUSION TO STATEMENT OF MR. MASTERSON

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, that question has been asked but it has not been answered. Mr. Masterson did not make an allegation. Mr. Masterson established the fact that he had a leak. He told the Government. It is right there in his statement. Are you calling Mr. Masterson a liar? Are you calling him a liar?