

Oral Questions

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Boudria: Now, as incredible as it is that the Prime Minister or any other Cabinet Minister would not have been notified of the Budget leak for two hours, I want to ask the Prime Minister specifically, he who is the chief executive officer of the Government across the way, why did he take the decision not to tell that information to the House of Commons and to the people of Canada? Why hide the facts?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the suggestion that the Government took a decision to hide information from the people of Canada is, of course, an absolute and complete fabrication and falsehood by the Hon. Member.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: I will inform my hon. friend again, and perhaps if he listens carefully he may want to reflect upon this before he raises any more charges against public servants or Members of the House.

The information came to the Deputy Minister of Finance, Mr. Fred Gorbet. Immediately after 1.30 p.m. he began to contact the RCMP to advise them to verify information and to check back with the source. He consulted and advised the Secretary of the Cabinet and the Clerk of the Privy Council. This was done and information was conveyed to me by Mr. Tellier between 3.30 p.m. and four o'clock in the afternoon. This information was absolutely consistent with the information that the police were no doubt seeking in their inquiry that had already been unleashed the night before, of which the House had full knowledge. All of this information was then being acquired in a proper and normal way by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, which has always served Canada by acting in an independent and proper manner.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, at page 2147 of *Hansard* and on several other pages it is stated that the Government, in the broadest sense, was aware of this information some time between Question Period and 5.40 p.m. that evening.

I want to tell the Prime Minister those are not nice words that he said about his Minister of Finance.

[*Translation*]

REQUEST FOR RESIGNATION OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put the following supplementary to the Prime Minister concerning the conduct of his Minister of Finance.

On April 27, at page 1032 of *Hansard*, the Prime Minister said, in referring to the Minister, and I quote:

—the Minister has always discharged his responsibilities, in this case as well.

Considering the fact that the Minister, aided and abetted by the rest of Cabinet, chose to hide this information from the House of Commons for one month, does the Prime Minister still think the Minister acted in a responsible manner in this case? Should he not be called to Parliament today and asked to resign?

[*English*]

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has served Canada and this House with great honour and perhaps one day, if the Hon. Member really changes his ways, he might aspire to the kind of honour achieved by the Minister of Finance.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: I acknowledge that would take almost a miracle because the Minister of Finance has no lessons to take from that Member in terms of propriety and honour.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mulroney: I am asked whether the Government was informed, and the Hon. Member used the terms 'in the broad sense'. Of course the Government, in the broad sense, was informed. When the Deputy Minister of Finance was notified, he in turn notified the Secretary to the Cabinet and Clerk of the Privy Council. Indeed, as the Minister of Finance said, the Government 'in the broad sense' was notified, and all action taken by the Government and by the Minister of Finance was perfectly consistent with the statement made the day before, namely that a police investigation was already under way and that we would let the police finish its investigation.