

*Privilege*

When did the Prime Minister find out? Why didn't the Prime Minister immediately demand the resignation of the Minister of Finance?

**Mr. Simmons:** He knew it at 2:45 yesterday.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Why did the Minister of Finance decide to try to proceed with a Budget when the principle of Budget secrecy had been violated? Why did the Prime Minister allow him to proceed in that fashion? Why didn't the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance realize that their trust responsibilities, dating back to the birth of our parliamentary system, forced him to resign to maintain that tradition, or did they not care?

How many other of these documents were floating around?

**An Hon. Member:** That is the question.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Who else knew, and in the meantime what stocks have been traded, what real estate has moved, what other transactions have taken place because these documents were not held confidentially by the Department of Finance? How many millions of dollars, indeed hundreds of millions of dollars, could have been made by the release of these documents?

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** Why didn't you come to work last night, John?

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** How many insiders benefited at the expense of the Canadian taxpayer? What privileged few could have made a killing at the expense of the rest of Canadians? Why didn't the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance realize that hundreds of millions of dollars could have been made at the expense of the ordinary taxpayer? Why didn't they realize that when an entire Budget falls into a few hands it is necessary that the Budget be cancelled, a new date set and a new Minister of Finance appointed?

• (1140)

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

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Or did they care, or did they understand? Why does the Minister not recognize that ordinary Canadians who work hard for their money and pay taxes grudgingly but willingly will not and cannot tolerate a system that is abused, and cannot tolerate the release of an entire budgetary document which may have gone to the benefit and advantage of

people we do not know about, but who will surely turn up.

Why don't the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) understand that the 724-year-old rule that lies at the heart of parliamentary democracy and at the heart of our democratic system is there not only because of constitutional proprieties, not only because of constitutional niceties, and not only because Members of Parliament feel they have a special privilege, but because here we have a fiduciary position to protect the ordinary Canadian, and that is why this practice is here.

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

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the privileges of all the representatives of the Canadian people have been breached and violated. Even more important, the rights of every single Canadian have been breached and violated. Every single Canadian has the right to feel confident in the understanding and with the assurance that the tax that they pay is revealed, supervised, challenged, controlled, and spent in a fair manner. If Budget secrecy does not apply to all Canadians then the system will not work.

If the Minister of Finance will not resign over the largest release of budgetary information in the history of parliamentary democracy, then there will be chaos in the system, lack of trust, lack of confidence, and lack of willingness of 11 million taxpayers to assess themselves voluntarily and to file that assessment with the Department of Finance.

If the Prime Minister cannot see his failure to compel and force the resignation of his Minister of Finance, or if the Minister of Finance does not understand his role as a custodian of the accounts of this country, and if the Prime Minister does not force the cancellation of the Budget, then he is saying that, fine, it's all right for some Canadians to have inside information while others do not. He is saying that it is all right any time in the future for some Canadians to reap untold millions of dollars of wrongful benefits while other Canadians pay the price.

**Mr. McDermid:** What nonsense.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** An Hon. Member says "What nonsense". He does not understand what this democracy is all about.