

Oral Questions

businessmen and to the people of Canada and the people of Ontario?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if there is any apology necessary it should come from the premier of Ontario who has now acknowledged the fact—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Mazankowski: —that the Prime Minister is out there promoting Canada, all parts and regions of Canada, all provinces of Canada, and it is unfortunate that the opposition fails to recognize, as I quoted from *The Globe and Mail* this morning, that in fact the Japanese happen to be concerned about the fiscal problems in Canada, the deficits, and that was acknowledged in the report by Edith Terry who said participants at the summit said the Japanese had raised the issue of Canada's public finances before Mr. Mulroney arrived.

That is not only the public finances of Ontario but indeed all of Canada and of course the hon. member should recognize that.

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is for the Deputy Prime Minister. It is a matter of record that this Prime Minister has been bad-mouthing Ontario in Hong Kong and in Japan. As Premier Bob Rae has pointed out—

Some hon. members: Oh, Oh.

Mr. Rodriguez: Now you are listening. I have their attention, Mr. Speaker. As Premier Bob Rae said, when the Prime Minister is travelling abroad he is not a Conservative, he is the Prime Minister of all of Canada. In the Prime Minister's own speech in this House during the debate on the Speech from the Throne, he pointed out that it is time to move beyond special interests. Now is the time to speak for the national interests.

In this spirit, can the government give the assurance that the Prime Minister will not bad-mouth any province on any future trips, not make bad jokes about refugees, will not practise mind-reading in public, and will act more statesmanlike?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it is really unfortunate that the NDP gets very sensitive when they are subjected to a bit of criticism. For example, the treasurer of the province of Ontario went to Wall Street and he got a blast for his budget. While we are talking about criticism, in a recent interview, Mr. Atkinson, the chief economist of the Bank of Montreal said there would be a tremendous price to pay for the fiscal and budgetary policies of the province of Ontario.

• (1430)

I quote what CTV said: "So Bob Rae's budget is costing people who borrow money for mortgages a half a point a year". Mr. Atkinson replied: "That's the estimate we are putting on it".

Members of the New Democratic Party cannot hide the fact that the budget that was brought down by the province of Ontario is an economic disaster. They should accept that fact, accept reality, and get on with the business of running the province.

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, it is to be noted that the Deputy Prime Minister did not answer the questions I posed to him.

[Translation]

We know that the Prime Minister intends to continue travelling in the coming weeks.

Can we have the assurance that in his coming travels, the Prime Minister will set aside his partisan comments and positively represent the interests of all parts of Canada?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Again, Mr. Speaker, I have had a chance to read and listen to what the Prime Minister has been saying. This is what Mr. d'Aquino stated.

Some hon. members: Oh, Oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. minister.

Mr. Mazankowski: It is May 27 and I understand that hon. members quoted quite freely yesterday, so perhaps I might be given the same privilege today.

Mr. d'Aquino said: "The only thing that I heard at lunch was the Prime Minister making a very strong pitch