

Oral Questions

tion, is the most powerful in the land, because a call from the Office is a call from the head of the Government, with all that entails—he knows that an official of his Office, Mr. Crenna, has been quoted as saying that the request was made for a title search of the residence of the now Leader of the Opposition. Is the Prime Minister denying that a request was made? If he is not, will he tell us who made that request?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not know who in name made that request. I would be prepared to say without any hesitation that, if Mr. Crenna made the search, it was probably requested by someone in my Office who was his superior, if not by one of his colleagues. So there is no denying that the request would have issued from my Office, if Mr. Crenna made—I believe the Hon. Member for Yellowhead is talking of the research at the Security Commission—

• (1450)

An Hon. Member: No, the mortgage.

Mr. Chrétien: The mortgage.

Mr. Trudeau: Then, so far as I know it is not Mr. Crenna who made that research. But someone in my office, I am informed, asked someone involved in real estate in Montreal to look at the public record to see if the story in *The Gazette* was correct, that Mr. Mulroney had bought his house for \$1. And I am told that I am incorrect in saying that he had sold it back for the same amount. I am sorry—

Mr. Chrétien: \$500,000.

Mr. Trudeau: —if I misled the House. It was unintentional. So what, Mr. Speaker? There was a verification on the public record as to whether the story in *The Gazette* was correct.

I wish the Leader of the Opposition, and all his supporters, would also make verification before they make the kind of unfounded allegations which very often they cull from the press. I mean, that is the story of the past two days. They took allegations out of the press which were patently incorrect and false, and they repeated them in this House without verifying whether they were true or not.

Apparently my Office has more conscience than the members of the Opposition. It verifies the public records before repeating nonsense.

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Right Hon. Joe Clark (Yellowhead): Well, Mr. Speaker, we are getting somewhere.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): The Prime Minister has now confirmed that his Office requested verification of that information, that it received verification of that information. Presumably there is a record of that verification. Will the Prime Minister tell us if the record of that verification was in the

Mulroney file which is being kept at public expense in the Prime Minister's Office? If not, why is it not there? And what else was removed from the Mulroney file before it was opened to the press?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the second part of the question devours the first. The Hon. Member presumes that something has been removed from the file. I do not even know if it was in the file, Mr. Speaker. We do know there was a story in *The Gazette* that somebody in my office had verified whether it was true or not. So presumably all that is in the file is a *Gazette* story, probably with a handwritten note, "This is correct. We verified it." I don't know, Mr. Speaker. I am certainly not interested in these files.

Mr. Coates: Why do you have them?

Mr. Jarvis: Somebody thinks you are interested.

An Hon. Member: Somebody is interested in it.

Mr. Trudeau: Well, someone over there obviously is very interested in knowing what we know about what is on the public record. It seems to me that the whole Iron Ore question has not been put forward by this Party. It has been part of the public record put forward by the Leader of the Opposition who gives himself great, great credit as to being a very able administrator—and he shows Iron Ore as the proof of that—and a man who knows how it is to carry a heavy mortgage, when he only paid a dollar for his house. These are public matters and it is incorrect, particularly for the former Prime Minister, to allege somehow that, because I am Prime Minister I am not also Leader of the Liberal Party, and that as Leader of the Liberal Party I do not have a political partisan function to perform. Once again, the Leader of the Opposition had exempt staff. I remember answering in front of a parliamentary committee that he had more people—

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Trudeau: —on his exempt staff than I did.

An Hon. Member: Shame!

Mr. Crosbie: The ramblings of a wreck. Order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Trudeau: What were they doing, Mr. Speaker? Were they putting things in files and then removing them surreptitiously so that the press would not see them? Do we go around making this kind of accusation—

Mr. Crosbie: Order.

Mr. Jarvis: Check with your Minister of Finance.

Mr. Trudeau: —about the former Prime Minister? What about his own files? Did he destroy—why did he destroy files when he became Leader of the Opposition?