

Oral Questions

[Translation]

—beyond criticism or suspicion.

[English]

We are trying to take them away from partisan criticism so that they can feel free to speak on the record so that the Canadian people can feel comfortable with them.

ECONOMIC STATEMENT—REQUEST THAT IMPACT STUDIES BE RELEASED

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister makes the Secretary of State for External Affairs look like the Apostle of Light.

In view of the Prime Minister's alleged commitment to openness in government, will he in fact confirm that background studies have been completed with respect to the impact on ordinary Canadians of the budgetary statement, the increases in sales tax and so on? In this spirit of openness and accountability to the public, will the Prime Minister not agree to table and make public the statements of the devastating impact that these financial cuts and increases in taxes will have on the people of Canada?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of State is not only an Apostle of Light, he is one of reason, thoughtfulness, and concern for the Canadian people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: He is an outstanding Secretary of State for External Affairs as the Member for Saint-Henri-Westmount said, quite properly, this morning. I agree with what he said.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: All information with regard to the economic program, which has received wide approval—

Mr. Berger: What is this, a mutual admiration society?

Mr. Mulroney: What is wrong with that? The NDP have been holding hands with you fellows behind the curtains long enough. It is time they were nice to us.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps the Prime Minister would like to complete his answer.

Mr. Mulroney: Consistent with the guidelines and our philosophy, the Minister of Finance and the President of the Treasury Board set out various reductions in public expenditures first in the House of Commons. I hope they were detailed to your satisfaction. Ministers and governmental officers were made available to respond to any further inquiries you had.

VISIBLE MINORITIES

INTERNMENT OF JAPANESE CANADIANS DURING WORLD WAR II

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Multiculturalism. Throughout, and immediately following the election, he promised that a formal apology to the Japanese-Canadian community would be forthcoming. He also favoured the establishment of a committee to examine redress. When will this apology be forthcoming? When will he establish and define the terms of reference, as well as the membership from the community and from Parliament, on this committee?

● (1130)

Hon. Jack Murta (Minister of State (Multiculturalism)): Mr. Speaker, the apology to the Japanese Canadian community is certainly uppermost in my mind and that of the Government. What happened to those Canadians during and after World War II is and was unforgettable and unforgivable. The Government is determined to make changes in light of the grave injustices that took place. Hopefully there will be an announcement in the not too distant future.

DISCUSSIONS WITH JAPANESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, my grave concern is that there is no consultation with the Japanese Canadian community. In that respect will the Minister confirm that he has unilaterally proposed to Cabinet a chair for Japanese Canadian studies as compensation and, if so, will he immediately stop that proposal and first consult the Japanese Canadian community?

Hon. Jack Murta (Minister of State (Multiculturalism)): Mr. Speaker, I will tell the Hon. Member that his information is incorrect. That is not the case in terms of the chair for Japanese Canadian studies. There have been ongoing discussions with the Japanese Canadian community. My staff and I have met with them. I will be meeting with them this weekend.

The President of the Japanese Canadian Community is a good friend of mine. He lives in the City of Winnipeg. We have good relations, and we intend to keep them that way.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

INFORMATION ACCESS—STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO MINISTER

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Given the new guidelines, is he now prepared to apologize both to the diplomatic corps and the journalists whom he maligned in recent statements, and in the guidelines that he set out within the last week, for what I consider to be