

Oral Questions

thorough investigation of all circumstances. Because of the special nature of a budget document, I asked the RCMP then to check specifically the possibility that people had benefited from this leak. It was the responsible thing to do, and that is exactly what I said yesterday. I have been repeating from the beginning that we had asked the RCMP to review all aspects of the matter, specially the possibility that some had benefitted from the leak. We gave a complete, clear and precise answer, that had been given to me by the RCMP Commissioner. It all seems very clear to me.

TWO LEAKS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General is trying to take back his words. Yesterday he told us that the RCMP has been investigating both leaks right from the start. The first one on Global TV and the second one at the company in Toronto.

I want to know if, at the beginning of the investigation, early Wednesday night, as you said, the RCMP was aware of both those leaks. I am asking the Solicitor General why on the following Thursday the Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister and the Solicitor General himself only referred to the Global leak. Why did they lie so shamelessly to the House that night?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Solicitor General of Canada and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, I find my colleague's comment inappropriate. I will simply refer to page 1912 of yesterday's *Hansard*, that my Hon. colleague has read, and I quote:

Mr. Speaker, as you know, there is an investigation by the RCMP into this case. It is a serious matter. I am informed by the Commissioner of the RCMP that the investigation has included, from the outset of the situation, the press story referred to. I am also informed by the commissioner that to date there has been no indication that any profiteering has resulted from advanced knowledge of the Budget. The investigation is continuing, and it would be inappropriate for me to comment further on this case.

It is very clear and I think this is different from what the Hon. Member referred to, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS—DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

Mr. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. Yesterday the Minister of Justice admitted that there may well have been many leaks. The direct quote is: "however many there may have been—"

An Hon. Member: Who said that?

Mr. Martin: On April 27, the Minister of Finance stated:

— that this violation did not result from negligence, carelessness or lack of proper security arrangements—

Given the fact that the Minister of Justice clearly feels that there was negligence in this matter, otherwise how would he know that there had been many leaks, my question to the Solicitor General is which of the two Ministers is correct?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Solicitor General of Canada and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, I just repeat what I said yesterday. The Hon. Member must not have listened to what I said a few minutes ago. As you know, Mr. Speaker, there is an investigation by the RCMP into this case.

An Hon. Member: It is a cover-up.

Mr. Blais: It is a serious matter. I am informed by the Commissioner of the RCMP that the investigation has included from the outset of the situation the press story referred to. I am also informed by the Commissioner that to date there has been no indication that any profiteering has resulted from advance knowledge of the Budget. That is clear, in English and in French.

ALLEGED COVER-UP

Mr. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, I did not ask about profiteering. I asked why there was a clear difference of opinion between the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Justice. Which of the two is he going to come down on? The real question is why the cover-up? The Deputy Prime Minister knows that there is no reason why he cannot answer this question. It does not prejudice in any way, shape or form the RCMP investigation. He yesterday selectively called for an RCMP investigation. There is only one question before this House. You are bringing this House into disrepute. Why the cover-up?