

Privilege

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs, I would want to make sure that I verify with him the exact nature of the communication.

My information in regard to the question raised is that the Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs, following meetings with the aboriginal leadership, offered to them that one of these conferences be devoted exclusively to questions of aboriginal concern. My information is that that was rejected.

Ms. Blondin: No, he rejected it.

Mr. Mulroney: My hon. friend says that the minister rejected it. My information is that the minister did not reject it.

Ms. Blondin: Your minister is lying to you.

Mr. Speaker: That is a completely improper suggestion. I think we are going to have to go on.

Some hon. members: Withdraw, withdraw.

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[Translation]

MINING

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Mining exploration in Quebec has been in a free fall for several months and the Quebec Prospectors' Association is attempting once again, before the budget is tabled, to convince Ottawa to restore tax incentives in Canada.

Can the minister tell us today if he intends to implement new measures to revitalize mining exploration in Canada and in Quebec?

• (1500)

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to thank the hon. member for the continuing effort he has engaged in, in support of the mining industry, a very important industry in Canada, worth some \$25 billion and some 400,000 jobs. I share the concern he has expressed.

There have been meetings with the mining associations. My understanding is that there is an interdepartmental process ongoing which involves Finance, Energy, Mines and Resources, Employment and Immigration, and Industry, Science and Technology to consider the very worth-while suggestions that have been advanced by the associations.

Mr. Speaker: I want to bring a matter to the attention of the House and also the hon. member for Western Arctic.

While the Prime Minister was answering a question that was put to him by the hon. member for Western Arctic, she very clearly said that his minister had lied to him, meaning the Right Hon. Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs.

I moved immediately to the next member because I was watching the clock, but that is a completely improper allegation. I know the hon. member did not have the floor, but that makes no difference; it was clearly heard. I would ask the hon. member to withdraw.

Ms. Blondin: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my remarks.

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PRIVILEGE

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege relates to the tabling in the House of a report by the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs on June 19, 1990. The committee at that time made certain recommendations to the House and to the government relating to an apology, compensation and recognition of the contribution of the Inuit people who had been transferred from northern Quebec to the community of Grise Fiord in the High Arctic.

Under Standing Order 109, the committee then called for a response by the government within the prescribed 150 days. As the Speaker will recall, in response to the committee report on November 19, 1990, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs tabled what he called The Hickling report which contained the government's response to our committee's recommendation. It totally supported the government's position, no apology, no recognition, no compensation.