

## GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

### OFFICE EXPENDITURES OF FORMER MINISTER OF TRANSPORT

**Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South):** Mr. Speaker, the details of the waste and maladministration of the former Liberal Government are now appearing. Today's report of the over-indulgence, the horrendous staffing practices, the lack of any sense of frugality shown by the former Minister of Transport the present Member of Parliament for Winnipeg-Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy), shows clearly how the former Government ran the finances of Canada into their present sorry state. No wonder, Mr. Speaker, the House is asked for over \$23 billion in borrowing authority.

The former Minister of Transport had an overly fat budget for his personal office. But \$1.2 million was not enough for him, and in five and a half months he not only spent his entire year's budget, but over \$860,000 on top.

He squandered public money for no reason other than to try to advance his personal image, secure his personal re-election, and protect, nurture, and provide cushy jobs for Liberals.

This Parliament ought to commence an inquiry into that abuse of public funds by the former Minister so that the public will be fully apprised of how his country was managed. There should be provision whereby Ministers who abuse the public trust personally repay the Government money lost and wasted. Parliament will now be called upon to supply a supplementary appropriation to cover the former Minister's profligacy—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Hon. Member's time has expired.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### SOCIAL SECURITY

#### USE OF POSSIBLE SAVINGS

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Right Hon. Prime Minister. I do not know whether he was able to catch the 6 a.m. radio news today.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** I thought I would, while the CBC is still able to provide the news.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** The Minister of National Health and Welfare, when asked whether the savings from a review of social programs would be used to reduce the deficit, told the CBC:

We have not discounted any options.

### Oral Questions

The Prime Minister will recall that in an interview with a reporter for *The Toronto Star* on November 17 he was asked the same question, namely, would savings accruing from reducing social programs be used to reduce the deficit?

No, absolutely not. Absolutely not.

Would the Prime Minister be good enough to explain to the House the contradiction between what the Minister of National Health and Welfare said on CBC radio this morning and what the right hon. gentleman told *The Toronto Star* reporter?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I did hear the news at six this morning.

**Mr. Deans:** You were on your way in.

**Mr. Mulroney:** I was in my jacuzzi, listening to it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** And then, just to be sure I had heard right, I turned on my satellite.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** There, indeed, was the Minister of Health in living colour—in the jacuzzi!

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Mulroney:** I heard the thoughtful statement of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. He said nothing inconsistent at all with the view that I expressed in Toronto, and a view that the Hon. Member for Sudbury expressed some sympathy for, namely, that we were ready to review some of these aspects to find out whether we could not make a better utilization of public funds, in other words, to direct those funds to those people in our society who needed them most. I do not see anything inconsistent between the statement of my hon. friend, the Minister of Health, and the general view that I expressed as supported by the Minister of Finance.

#### STATEMENT MADE BY MINISTER OF NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** I submit, Mr. Speaker, to the right hon. gentleman, that the statement which the Minister of Health made is directly contradictory to the interview which the right hon. gentleman gave to *The Toronto Star* reporter.

In that same interview he said the money so found by a review of the social programs would be, as he said this afternoon, redirected to the needy. When that same question was put to the Minister of Health in the committee yesterday by the Hon. Member for Sudbury, the Minister said:

No, I think our imagination is a little more fertile than that.