

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Riis:** These people are viewing the entire document, not just one page.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** Mr. Speaker, this question has been asked a couple of times before. These are experts who have been used from time to time over the years by Department of Finance officials as a sounding board. I presume—

**Mr. Riis:** Why today?

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** The reason why they are in today—

**Mr. Speaker:** We will probably move ahead somewhat better if the Member who asks the question encourages his or her colleagues to allow the Minister to answer.

• (1450)

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I have answered the question two or three times. These people are here to act as a sounding board for the Department of Finance on technical matters relating to tax reform. We are not trying to do tax reform in the way it has been done in the past, when problems have arisen. We are trying to anticipate the problems as much as we can through the advice of technical people working with the officials on an ongoing basis. That is the basis for their being here today.

## REASON FOR CONSULTANTS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Several of these privileged tax experts have admitted that the fact that they are being given privileged access to the tax reform documentation today gives them an advantage over their competitors.

A Mr. Allan Taitz, a tax partner with Thorne Ernst & Whinney, chortled: "This gives us a bit more time to digest it . . . don't forget, every firm in town is going to write a report for their clients."

My question for the Minister is: Isn't the real reason for this privileged free information to give a select group of tax experts a head start on the tax reform package to the advantage of their clients and at the expense of their competitors, in return for which they are co-opted to sell the Minister's message across the country?

**An Hon. Member:** Absolutely.

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is a member of the same profession and has in fact practised with a number of these people, or I presume he has practised with them. He knows them, and I think he probably respects their integrity. I presume he would respect—

**An Hon. Member:** It is your integrity that is being questioned.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** I presume he would respect the nature of the relationship that these people have with the

Department of Finance and that he would not call into question the motives of these people—

**An Hon. Member:** It is your judgment that is being called into question.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** —the motives of these people in coming to work with the officials of the Department of Finance—

**An Hon. Member:** It is your integrity.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** —to provide advice and to help make the tax policies of this country better.

## PURPOSE OF ACCESS

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** We are trying to get at the real purpose for this peekaboo head start. The books are closed. The Minister has admitted that the books are closed. In response to the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap he has admitted that, no matter what advice they might give him today, he will not change his mind or amend the document. Their presence seems superfluous. For what other reason are they there than to give them a head start, at the expense of the ordinary taxpayer and at the expense of their competitors?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I should thank the Leader of the Opposition for putting the spotlight on tomorrow night at eight o'clock. When people turn on their television sets right across the country, they are going to have one thing on their minds, and that is whether or not the advice that was given to the Minister of Finance was good advice and is it reflected in the quality of the White Paper.

**An Hon. Member:** Good for whom?

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** I think people across the country are going to decide that, yes, it is reflected and it was good quality advice.

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## NATIONAL PARKS

## FEDERAL OFFER TO ESTABLISH SOUTH MORESBY NATIONAL PARK

**Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

The demand by the B.C. Government for \$200 million in compensation for designating South Moresby as a national park reserve bears no relation to government or independent evaluations.

Since knowledgeable Canadians and British Columbians know that the federal offer of \$106 million is realistic, and since this House just one month ago unanimously adopted a resolution calling for the designation of South Moresby as a