

*Oral Questions*

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

## THE BUDGET

## TIMING OF KNOWLEDGE OF PRIME MINISTER

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

Either the Conservative Government is playing a most dangerous game conspiring to hide the truth on the one hand and bullying anyone who reveals the truth on the other, or the Government lost control during a crisis to a group of bureaucrats. In either case the result for Canadians is both disturbing and fundamentally wrong.

The Minister of Finance took 28 days to tell the House the story that he did not know about the Mutual Life leak during Question Period on April 27.

The Deputy Prime Minister took three days to tell us the same story.

We are now at day 35 of this scandal and Canadians have still not heard from the Prime Minister's own mouth exactly what he claims he heard about the leak to Mutual Life.

During his overseas trip—

**Some Hon. Members:** Question!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** My question to the Prime Minister is this: When and how did he learn of the Mutual Life leak? When he did learn, why did he not immediately report to Parliament?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker—

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

**Mr. Mulroney:** I was advised by the Clerk of the Privy Council about the telephone call from Mutual Life some time between 3.30 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon of April 27.

I was also advised by Mr. Tellier, the Clerk of the Council, that appropriate action had been taken, that the matter had been referred to the RCMP as part of their investigation which was already under way into this whole matter. I hope that satisfies my right hon. friend.

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

[Translation]

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** No, Mr. Speaker, we are not satisfied with that.

THE SECOND BUDGET LEAK—REQUEST AS TO WHY INFORMATION WAS NOT TRANSMITTED IMMEDIATELY TO PARLIAMENT

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** We have a parliamentary system of government. We only have this Parliament which represents the Canadian people. And when Cabinet Ministers mislead Parliament for 35 days, they mock our parliamentary system and the people are misled.

**Some Hon. Members:** Order!

**Mr. Speaker:** Would the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition please put his question?

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister had already been informed around 3.30 p.m., why did he not immediately reveal the second budget leak, the one to Mutual of Canada, to Parliament, since he had promised this House the same day, April 27, at 3 p.m., half an hour earlier, that any new information would be immediately reported to the Parliament of Canada? Why did he hide the truth for 35 days?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, we must vigorously refute the Opposition Leader's allegation that the Minister of Finance misled Parliament, when the Minister of Finance provided full and complete answers. He speaks of the Prime Minister's obligation to report to the House. In fact, as reported on page 1035 of *Hansard* for April 27, following a question by the Hon. Member for Burnaby-Kingsway, and I quote:

[English]

However, the Solicitor General has said if any information comes to him, he will report to the House immediately—

The Solicitor General has said, precisely at page 1032, and I quote him carefully:

[Translation]

The investigation is underway, Mr. Speaker, and as soon as we have the facts, the findings, we will be able to disclose them.

So, indeed, Mr. Speaker, the commitment I gave to the House has been followed to the letter. The information had already been reported by the Solicitor General and