

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): No!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

• (1450)

[*English*]

Mrs. Marleau: Mr. Speaker, that is what they said about Sinclair Stevens, too.

ROLE OF FIRST MINISTER

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, my question is again for the Prime Minister. Does the Prime Minister realize that by condoning the actions of his Minister of Finance he is demonstrating a fundamental lack of understanding of the role of a First Minister of this country?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, there is clearly a divergence of views between my hon. friend and myself with regard to the value of the Minister of Finance. If my hon. friend clings to the view that she has just expressed, why does she not bring forward a motion of non-confidence in the Minister and see what happens?

QUERY AS TO CHARGING OF GLOBAL TV REPORTER

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice. On page 1012 of *Hansard* on April 27, 1989, the Minister of Justice in describing the events of the night before, that is the Global report on the Budget leak, said the following:

I think you would find that the particular reporter in a responsible manner did not run the story until he had it corroborated.

I ask the Minister of Justice why a reporter who, in his own words, acted in a responsible manner, has been charged with a criminal offence?

Mr. Speaker: I pointed out yesterday the very important distinction in terms of the administration of criminal law in Canada, that with respect to this particular prosecution which is now public knowledge, it is being conducted by the Province of Ontario and law officers under the direction of that province. Now the question has been put, the Minister of Justice can respond to it if he wishes.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the matter is sub judice and I have no intention of commenting.

POSSIBILITY OF FAIR TRIAL QUESTIONED

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Justice this question: The Prime Minister of Canada has described what occurred, as long ago as a month, as a criminal act that could result in the incarceration of certain individuals. The Minister of Finance has described this whole matter as a wilful criminal act, as has the Deputy Prime Minister, and I believe, Mr. Speaker, the record will show so has the Minister of Justice.

I ask the Minister of Justice, given the principle on which he just refused to answer a question, whether he believes that any of the individuals involved can have a fair trial when the Prime Minister has already predetermined them to be criminals and likely to be incarcerated?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will not speak to the hypocrisy of that question.

Mr. Tobin: Answer the question. Hypocrite.

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, on April 27, 1989, in the House of Commons, in response to a question from my right hon. friend, I indicated that we had seen comments of a reporter by the name of Mr. French of Global Television who was the first person to receive the call—

Mr. Tobin: He said a lot more than that, Prime Minister.

Mr. Mulroney: Perhaps I could conclude. Mr. French, who was a colleague at Global Television, was that same evening being interviewed on television. Mr. French was the first person who received the call from an individual who apparently took the documents. Here is what the line in the transcript said. The reporter, Mr. French, of Global Television said with regard to the individual, "I guess the criminal likes to return to the scene of a crime".

Mr. French of Global Television that night was referring to the individual who conveyed the information to Mr. Small. We believe that all these individuals who have been charged are entitled to the presumption of innocence—

Mr. Allmand: You called them criminals.