

he has obtained the resignation of the Deputy Prime Minister in light of the conduct of that Minister which obviously undermines his integrity and, therefore, that of the entire Government?

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Members will know that the Chair is in some difficulty on this question.

**An Hon. Member:** So is the Government.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Given the nature of the preamble and the fact the question concerns a Minister in the Cabinet, I think I must allow the Prime Minister to answer it. However, I must caution Members to deal, as best they can in all these matters, with questions to Ministers about their responsibilities as opposed to anything else.

**Mr. Frith:** We are talking integrity.

**An Hon. Member:** This has nothing to do with ministerial responsibility.

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the question contains a number of very serious misstatements of fact and a really quite grotesque error which casts aspersions on the reputation of someone who has served his country honourably, in times of war and peace, for 30 years in the House of Commons, and I think it ought to be withdrawn.

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

#### REQUEST FOR RESIGNATION OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

**Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister is on tape as having said, referring to a meeting of the Liberal caucus:

—I was hearing every word that was spoken.

He also said:

There was a method by which we knew every Wednesday what was said in the Liberal caucus, word for bloody word.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Gray (Windsor West):** I ask the Prime Minister, in those circumstances—

**Some Hon. Members:** Order!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Can I ask the Hon. Member to put a question on ministerial accountability, please.

**Mr. Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, I am asking a question of the Prime Minister about his responsibility to have people in his Cabinet who have the necessary integrity to be there.

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

**Mr. Gray (Windsor West):** In light of the words of the Deputy Prime Minister himself, why does the Prime Minister allow that Minister to stay in his Cabinet?

#### Oral Questions

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, these questions are no doubt founded on an article which appeared in *The Toronto Star* this morning. That is a very interesting story. However, what that article was speaking about was events which are alleged to have occurred almost a quarter of a century ago. They were the subject of an interview, according to the article, with Mr. Stursberg in 1973; the subject of a book published in 1976; the subject of a tape, apparently, which has been available since January of 1981, and which appeared in *Saturday Night* magazine in January of 1985 in these words:

"One of Pearson's ministers said (in caucus) that he had two tasks: one, to destroy John Diefenbaker and two, to destroy Erik Nielsen. How do I know the words spoken in the Liberal caucus?" Nielsen smiles.

"No, there were no bugging devices. Wires were crossed on an electronic system being installed between the committee rooms and we knew every goddamn word that was spoken inside!"

Mr. Speaker, I think that perhaps I speak too much to the media.

● (1420)

#### REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER SECURE RESIGNATION

**Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister stands condemned by the words from his own mouth which he said just a minute ago in the House. Does the Prime Minister not agree that he has a sacred trust as Prime Minister to defend the integrity of the parliamentary system, which includes the confidentiality of caucus meetings of all Parties and, as a result of the admission of the Deputy Prime Minister, he has no alternative but to seek and obtain his immediate resignation?

**Mr. Nunziata:** No respect for Parliament.

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

**Mr. McDermid:** Listen to who's talking.

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, in my 28 years in the House of Commons I have seen virtually a flurry of plain brown envelopes flying around the place. The Opposition Members, when in Government, were familiar with that, as they are now in both opposition Parties.

It is a practice which I have given my best efforts to terminate but thus far they have been a total failure.

#### [Translation]

#### ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING MINISTER—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Prime Minister.

In light of the *Toronto Star* revelations that the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence indulged in electronic eavesdropping when he was a Member of the Opposition, does the Prime Minister find it acceptable to have as