

Oral Questions

to an exemption from the Conflict of Interest Code, specifically Clause 24 dealing with political Party funds, has potentially far-reaching implications for all Category A public office holders, both current holders and future holders.

My question to the Prime Minister is the following. Given that Mr. Kingsley is not an officer of Parliament and therefore not accountable to Parliament, but is, rather, a civil servant accountable to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and to the Prime Minister, will the Prime Minister direct Mr. Kingsley to provide Parliament with a full explanatory briefing setting out the rationale for the position announced by him yesterday? I hope that the Prime Minister will welcome this prudent and reasonable suggestion.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I answered that question yesterday. I indicated yesterday and on other occasions that there will be an important piece of legislation introduced soon in the House that will deal with this and important allied matters. At that point in time, clearly, my hon. friend will no doubt want to raise matters of concern to him involving this and other items. At that time I will be happy on behalf of the Government and my colleagues to listen to him and to produce to the extent humanly possible any expert testimony that he might wish.

I think what all Members of Parliament want is an effective piece of legislation, recognizing that there is no substitute for personal integrity. We want an effective piece of legislation that does not needlessly place Members of Parliament in a straitjacket which will preclude them from leading lives. I seek this. I presume my hon. friend seeks the same thing. I will be happy to work with him and officers of the Government to bring this about.

REQUEST FOR EXPLANATION OF POSITION

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is indeed right. He did say yesterday that legislation is coming and he promised to work with the Opposition. We welcome that. That is not what I am asking about today.

I am asking about an exemption declared yesterday by Mr. Kingsley without any explanation whatsoever based on the current legislation that now applies. Given that Mr. Kingsley is not an officer of Parliament and therefore not accountable to Parliament, but rather a civil servant accountable to Cabinet and ultimately to the Prime Minister, will the Prime Minister direct Mr. Kingsley to explain the rationale behind the judgment brought down yesterday based on the current conflict of interest guidelines, and not based on some future legislation the Prime Minister might introduce in the weeks ahead?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the question raised by my hon. friend deals with Mr. Kingsley's opinion. It is one that he delivered. It is clear cut. It deals with the matters raised by Members of the House. My

hon. friend, I suppose, if he wishes to interrogate him or any other public servant, can seek the appropriate instrument to do so.

In fairness to Mr. Kingsley, because certainly no one would want to impugn his motives, he provided a public document which stands by itself on its own. If my hon. friend has any questions he wishes to ask him, then I suppose he can direct them to the appropriate people.

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[Translation]

THE ADMINISTRATION

MICHEL CÔTÉ AFFAIR—QUERY WHETHER PRIME MINISTER BRIEFED BY HIS PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, I also have a question for the Prime Minister. According to *Le Devoir* reporter Michel Vastel, Bernard Roy and the former Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources had a conversation last November about a potential conflict of interest for the Hon. Member for Langelier. As the Prime Minister has said that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources was not in Canada during the week of November 10, I would like to ask this question: Has the Prime Minister spoken with his principal secretary about the events of November 1986, and can he now confirm whether or not Mr. Roy and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources had a conversation about a possible conflict of interest for the Hon. Member for Langelier some time in November 1986, if not necessarily during the week of November 10?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have already replied to this question. I have no further comment. I hope that the Hon. Member will not ask me to comment every speculation or opinion published by Canadian newspapers! He is going fishing. He would like me to cross-examine all the officials of my Government. If you have an accusation to make against a Member of Parliament or a member of my staff, please stand up and have the courage to make a specific accusation. Otherwise, please shut up.

[English]

QUERY WHETHER PRIME MINISTER SPOKE WITH PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, once again the Prime Minister is trying to be a bit too cute.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I am sure that all Hon. Members who want to put questions will put them and all of those responding will want to stick to the answers. The Hon. Member for Yorkton—Melville.