

*Oral Questions***MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT****ALLEGATION AGAINST PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS SECRETARY**

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg-Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. I have here a copy of a document reportedly prepared by Mr. William Fox of the Prime Minister's Office, outlining a communication strategy on the free trade proposal. In this document the recommendation is made that the Government undertake special studies and surveys into opposition Members' ridings in order to gain information which would discredit those Hon. Members.

Does the Prime Minister not consider that these recommendations made by members of his staff, if carried through, would constitute a serious infringement on the privileges and rights of Members of this House? And would he give us the assurance that the Government would not undertake these kinds of dirty tricks in order to sell its free trade proposal?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge at all of the document which is being brandished by my hon. friend. If he is serious, he will want to file this immediately in the House of Commons so that we can all examine it. But the suggestion that he makes is fundamentally odious in the extreme vis-à-vis the privileges of every Hon. Member of this House.

I can tell him without even seeing that document that Bill Fox, my press secretary, would not be associated with any such document directly or indirectly, because he is a most honourable person.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORIGIN OF DOCUMENT

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg-Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to submit the documents and table them. I am also pleased to hear the Prime Minister's assurances about the infringements. But someone in the Government prepared this document—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy: —and we would like to know who prepared it. And is the Prime Minister—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy: May I be allowed a question, Mr. Speaker? Is the Prime Minister prepared to have an examination as to where and who is making these recommendations, and will he give us his assurance that the recommendations in fact will not be carried out?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): I give that assurance. And I ask Hon. Members of the House if this is not exactly symptomatic of the disease which has taken over the Liberal Party, where you accuse people and then you say: "Oh, I may have made a mistake"—

Mr. Axworthy: I did not. I said let's examine it, let's find out who prepared it.

Mr. Mulroney: Yes, indeed, the record will show—

Mr. Axworthy: Let's find out.

Mr. Mulroney: The record will show that you are now backtracking. If you have a serious charge to make about a person, make the charge but do not backtrack—

Mr. Axworthy: Here it is. We'll table it.

Mr. Mulroney: —because we stand for individual rights and liberties—

Mr. Axworthy: Oh, yes?

Mr. Mulroney: —and we will protect everyone's reputation in this House—

Mr. Axworthy: Sure you will.

Mr. Mulroney: —against attacks by the Liberal Party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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BANKS AND BANKING**CANADIAN COMMERCIAL BANK—REQUEST FOR LIST OF DEPOSITORS**

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister who this morning in his press conference spoke of reasonableness and responsibility on behalf of Hon. Members. He will know that we are bringing forward shortly for discussion a \$1 billion bank bail-out Bill. He has been anxious to refer the matter to committee on a number of occasions.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: That's a different matter altogether.

Mr. Riis: Would he not admit that since taxpayers' money will now be going to rather phantom-like depositors who are uninsured, that it would be the honourable thing for the Government to provide us with a list of all of those individual depositors who will be receiving the taxpayers' money?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: It has nothing to do with the investigation.

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, we have had a number of discussions on this topic. I have been indicating all the way along that I am prepared to provide categories of depositors by any number of divisions, by any number of categories, but that the spirit and the legal intent of Section 251 of the Bank Act indicates that the names of depositors in Canadian financial institutions should not be released to the public.