

National

SECOND BUDGET LEAK

Wilson admits he knew

By JOAN BRYDEN
Southam News

OTTAWA — Finance Minister Michael Wilson admitted Wednesday he knew the federal budget had been leaked to a major financial institution before he tabled the document in the House of Commons.

Wilson told the commons his office was informed shortly after noon on April 27 that a budget summary had been leaked to Mutual Life of Canada two days earlier. Wilson said he was told about the leak "shortly after that."

He did not refute opposition accusations that he had no way of

knowing Mutual Life, one of the country's largest insurance companies, had not benefited from the advance budget information when he tabled the budget in the Commons.

The admission came amid a barrage of opposition demands that Wilson rescind the budget and resign.

"Why didn't the minister of finance, in the circumstances we now know, withdraw his budget?" Liberal Leader John Turner demanded during a raucous question period. "Why did this supposed man of integrity mislead the House of Commons?"

The night before he tabled the budget, Wilson had been forced to release it at a press conference after Global television broadcast details of the budget summary.

Neither Wilson, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney nor any other cabinet minister mentioned the second leak to Mutual Life throughout the ensuing uproar. Until last week, when the government acknowledged a second leak to an unidentified company was being investigated by the RCMP, ministers repeatedly referred only to the single leak to Global.

Mutual Life president Jack Masterman confirmed in a statement Tuesday that his company was the unidentified recipient of the second leak. He said he informed the RCMP and deputy finance minister Fred Gorbet about the leak shortly after noon on April 27, as soon as he found out about it.

Wilson insisted Wednesday that he did not have to reveal the Mutual Life leak because it was only an allegation, which was immediately turned over to the RCMP for investigation.

But Turner said it's clear Wilson would never have disclosed the Mutual Life leak if Masterman hadn't released a statement.

"The reason, and it's clear to me now, that the minister didn't have the forthrightness and honesty to tell the people of Canada when he knew (about the Mutual Life) is that he wanted to proceed with his budget," Turner told reporters.

"He knew that a second leak would render that impossible, particularly a leak in the hands of one of the largest financial institutions in the country, a financial institution with \$11 billion in assets and 8,000 employees."

Earlier Wednesday, the lawyer for George McFarlane, a Mutual Life insurance agent in Ottawa, released a statement saying McFarlane received a copy of the budget summary on April 24 from his son. Robert McFarlane had obtained it that day in a bar from an unidentified friend who works for the government printing bureau.

The following day, McFarlane showed the document to another Mutual Life employee who photocopied it and sent it to the company's head office in Waterloo. Then a third employee photocopied the document and took it to the Toronto Mutual Life office.

McFarlane and his son say they did not leak the document to Global.

YUKON MP MAKES BID TO LEAD NDP

OTTAWA (CP) — Yukon MP Audrey McLaughlin said Wednesday she is seeking leadership of the New Democratic Party.

At a rally of supporters, that included six fellow caucus members chanting and clapping in unison and even a baby or two, the 52-year-old Yukon MP said it is her goal to finish what current leader Ed Broadbent started. That is — building a national party, not only by electing members from every region, but also by appealing to people from all walks of life.

McLaughlin, elected caucus chairman last fall, said the party must review its policies not to ensure they will be relevant in the 1990s but to ensure they fit NDP principles.

"Policies change but principles do not," she told 55 supporters crowded into a parliamentary meeting room.

McLaughlin voted against the Meech Lake constitutional accord soon after her 1987 byelection victory because it did not include representation for northerners, aboriginal peoples and women.

McLaughlin's entry brings to four the number of NDP caucus members who have declared themselves. The others are Ian Waddell of British Columbia, Steven Langdon of Ontario and Simon de Jong of Saskatchewan.

Foes trade blows as election nears

SOURIS, P.E.I. (CP) — An advance poll for Monday's P.E.I. election has changed from an expected timid affair into a touchy campaign battleground for Liberal and Conservative workers.

On Wednesday, Conservatives in the eastern riding of Kings 1st accused the Liberals of irregular voting practices. In particular, they objected to Liberal workers accompanying four young voters into the booths without any obvious reasons.

The Liberals, perhaps as an indication of growing confidence in an election victory, sloughed off the charges. The Tories are just grasping for straws, said candidate Johnny Young, the fisheries minister.

Under the Election Act, the only voters eligible for assistance in the booth are the disabled, the blind or the illiterate. But Tory agent Anne MacDonald said one of the voters brought in by the Liberals has at least a Grade 9 education.

He marked his ballot as a member of Young's family looked on, MacDonald said.

Joyce O'Brien, district returning officer in charge of the poll, noted the Tory monitoring agents had been present at the advance poll Tuesday, "and had made no objection until long after the fact."

Campaign manager Winnie MacKay said the Tories will lodge a formal complaint which could be

handled by the RCMP.

As the squabbling continued, the leaders of the two main parties were busy wooing the voters in Queens County, home to more than half the 89,230 eligible voters.

At the community hall in the tiny farming village of York in the riding of Queen's 3rd, Premier Joe Ghiz tackled the year's most popular topic — the environment.

For \$175,000 a year, a re-elected Liberal government would send 50 young Islanders off to learn to be environmentalists, although not anti-industry fanatics, he said.

"The 1990s will belong, in large measure, to the environmentally wise, and on Prince Edward Island we have a responsibility to teach good stewardship and conservation," Ghiz said, repeating words from the throne speech.

Tory Leader Mel Gass wrapped up his day of hand-shaking with a rally in the neighboring riding of Queen's 4th. No new program was announced, but he took the occasion to continue hammering at the Liberals.

Gold price

TORONTO (CP) — Gold was quoted at \$439 bid Cdn (\$363 US) and \$440 asked Cdn (\$364 US) in mid-morning trading today by Deak International, a major gold and foreign exchange dealer.

NFLD. SEX CASE

Lawsuit launched

TORONTO (CP) — A former alter boy who alleges he was sexually abused by members of a teaching order has launched a \$2-million lawsuit against the Newfoundland government and the Roman Catholic Church.

Shane Earle, 22, was sent by the government to the Mount Cashel orphanage in St. John's, Nfld., in 1972 when he was five.

Earle says he and other children were sexually and physically abused daily by the Christian Brothers who ran the orphanage.

"It was part of the daily routine," Earle said Wednesday in Toronto.

Earle said he told authorities what was going on in the orphanage and the provincial justice department investigated. No charges

were laid after the church agreed to remove three men suspected of abusing children.

But Earle, now a Toronto waiter, said the abuse at the orphanage continued until he was 16.

He said he decided to launch the lawsuit after the Newfoundland government reopened the case last year.

A total of 14 priests, former priests and Christian Brothers have been charged with sexual misconduct against Newfoundland boys in the last 17 months.

A government-appointed judicial inquiry, headed by a retired Ontario judge, will begin hearings next month into allegations of a police coverup of sexual abuse at the orphanage in the 1970s.

Navy gets new chief

HALIFAX (CP) — Canada's navy has a new top sailor.

Rear-Admiral Robert E. George has been promoted to vice-admiral and will take over as commander of Maritime Command in Halifax, Defence Minister Bill McKnight said in a statement from Ottawa.

George, 48, replaces Vice-Admiral Charles Thomas who took on the job in July 1987, weeks after the release of the Conservative government's defence white paper which promised a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines for the navy.

Plans for the submarines were formally cancelled in last month's federal budget.

McKnight's press release didn't say where Thomas, an ardent supporter of the nuclear submarines, would be reassigned. A Defence Department spokesman in Ottawa said other appointments were expected to be announced soon.

George was commander of Maritime Forces Pacific, based in Esquimalt, B.C.

McKnight also announced the appointment of Rear-Admiral Peter Cairns to take over for George as commander of Maritime Forces Pacific and deputy commander of maritime command at Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt.

The statement didn't say when the appointments take effect.

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