

THE SENATE

Wednesday, September 25, 1985

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.
Prayers

INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

FOURTEENTH TO SEVENTEENTH REPORTS OF COMMITTEE TABLED

The Hon. the Speaker, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, tabled the committee's fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth reports approving budgets of the following committees:

Legal and Constitutional Affairs;
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry;
National Finance; and
National Defence

(For text of reports see today's Minutes of the Proceedings of the Senate.)

[Translation]

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES ON POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Hon. Fernand-E. Leblanc: Honourable senators, I give notice that tomorrow, Thursday, September 26, 1985, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the activities of the Government of Canada in its financial support of post-secondary education and vocational training; and

That the Committee have power to engage the services of such professional, clerical and other personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of the said examination.

prompted by the confusion that surrounds this issue day by day.

The first indication of confusion arose when the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Prime Minister appeared to disagree on when the Prime Minister first knew about this, and if not the Prime Minister himself, then the Prime Minister's Office. It is because the Prime Minister is involved and, I think, the Prime Minister's credibility, that the confusion should be settled. I am asking the Leader of the Government in the Senate to try to take some action to clear this up, because of his reputation as an experienced politician and a pretty cool customer, because the matter has not been characterized by actions taken by cool customers to date.

The Prime Minister said that he took immediate action as soon as he knew about the matter. He said the date on which he first knew about it was when the CBC program was aired.

The latest confusion, and certainly the latest grounds for doubting the credibility of the Prime Minister—a serious matter, of course—results from what a Conservative Member of Parliament, Fred McCain, has said, that is that he raised this question of the release of this doubtful and disapproved tuna with the Prime Minister before the program was aired. Apparently, that statement was changed again adding more to the confusion. Therefore, I ask the Leader of the Government if he can tell us, and through us the people of Canada, whether Mr. McCain raised the issue of the million cans of tainted tuna with any members of the government at any time before the program was aired and, if so, with whom?

● (1400)

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have not seen the report to which my honourable friend refers but I willingly accept his word that that is the report. It appears that there are now two reports—namely, the original statement and a correction.

Speaking for myself, the issue was not raised with me and I think that it would be appropriate for me to take the question as notice so that I can ask some of my colleagues if it was raised with them. I certainly have no knowledge of it.

QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

SALE OF CANNED TUNA UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION— EXTENT OF KNOWLEDGE OF MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. It relates to the tuna matter and is

BANKING

CANADIAN COMMERCIAL BANK AND NORTHLAND BANK— DEPOSIT INSURANCE—GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. H. A. Olson: Honourable senators, I should like to raise a question with respect to the undertakings, guarantees and so on that have been given by the government to the depositors in the Canadian Commercial Bank and the Northland Bank. I raised this question yesterday and I do so again