

*Oral Questions*

was not on the bargaining table in the free trade negotiations. His words were: "Nothing was said that might cast doubts on this position".

Since the Prime Minister personally believed Senator Matsunaga and the other Senators, and since that Senator is now saying that Canadian and American cultures ought to be blended, how did the Prime Minister fail to get his message across to this very important American Senator?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I have not seen a direct quotation from Senator Matsunaga. What has been reported to me is the report of a conversation that is alleged to have taken place. I will look at the transcript, if one is immediately available. Based on what was said, I can indicate that Senator Matsunaga, whom I met, is a distinguished Senator from Hawaii and has a point of view in regard to culture that even my right hon. friend would readily agree is not widely shared, if at all, by anyone here or elsewhere.

[*Translation*]

REQUEST FOR EXPLANATION OF SENATOR MATSUNAGA'S  
ATTITUDE

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, we could give the Prime Minister a report on the conversation and the interview with the Senator, but if, as he claims, the Prime Minister always stresses that Canada is a bilingual country and that bilingualism is not negotiable in the free trade talks, why did Senator Matsunaga claim in the interview that everybody in Canada speaks English? Did the Prime Minister of Canada inform Senator Matsunaga or did he not? And if he did, how are we to explain this attitude?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I am now being held responsible for the level of understanding of every Member and Minister, every U.S. senator and representative. Is Senator Matsunaga unaware of the fact that Canada is a bilingual country, and do I have a responsibility to help him understand that? I think we took full advantage of that important moment when the U.S. President came here to the House only 48 hours ago. The proceedings were broadcast live to the United States, and the Prime Minister of Canada, in his speech and his presentation, made it clear, in English and in French, that this country is bilingual, at all times.

[*English*]

ECONOMIC UNION ADVOCATED BY U.S. SENATOR

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, of course Senator Matsunaga is not just a run-of-the-mill U.S. Senator. He happens to be Chairman of the sub-Committee on Trade and happened to be the swing vote that authorized the President to begin negotiations on the fast track. The Prime Minister said in the House that he had briefed the Senator and his colleagues on the cultural aspects of Canada. Indeed, he had lunch and a subsequent meeting with those four Senators.

Senator Matsunaga also said that he favoured economic union between Canada and the United States.

• (1425)

Why is it all these senior American officials and senior American Senators get these wild ideas after meeting with the Prime Minister? What does he do at these meetings?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** I don't know, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** That's the problem.

**Mr. Mulroney:** I don't know. I was going to ask my right hon. friend, because the Leader of the Liberal Party makes a clear-cut statement that he is opposed to free trade, but the Hon. Member for Saint-Henri—Westmount does not understand. He says he is in favour. Take him to lunch.

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

CULTURAL PROTECTION—PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION

**Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal):** Mr. Speaker, I have the feeling that the Prime Minister is out to lunch.

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

**Mrs. Finestone:** I would like to follow up on the Prime Minister's response because it painfully illustrates that the Prime Minister has failed to understand the American political process and he has failed to understand, and clearly explain, Canada's views on Canadian language and culture and to explain that to American decision-makers.

Does he not realize that what the Senator said, that the concept of Canadian cultural protection is really a misconception, that the sooner our cultures are blended into one the better it will be for both our countries, is not acceptable? What is the Prime Minister going to do to ensure that this melting-pot policy does not become part of the reality of tomorrow? And how will he refute the Senator's view that: "You are going to get it whether you like it or not"?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, this is a pretty slow day. They are really catching up after the success of yesterday.

With regard to my hon. friend's question, my hon. friend was present in the House of Commons when a very important debate took place with regard to trade where the Government, in its resolution, clearly stipulated that the debate was engaged pursuant to a set of criteria which acknowledged at all times the integrity of the country, our linguistic and cultural provisions. No one—no one—in this House, or elsewhere, with a brain in his head has called that into question. I urge my hon. friend—

**Mr. Riis:** Tell it to the Senator.