

Oral Questions

Would the Prime Minister instruct his Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, in light of the dangerous situation at all those DFO offices right now, not to leave Nova Scotia without meeting with some of the representatives of those fishermen?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think most members of the House of Commons would acknowledge that since his swearing in as Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the minister has spend an enormous amount of time meeting with fishermen in all parts of Atlantic Canada. I personally had the occasion to—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker, I am trying to respond to my hon. friend. I personally had the occasion to be—

Ms. Campbell (South West Nova): It is very dangerous.

An hon. member: Come on, motor-mouth.

Ms. Campbell (South West Nova): He is spending government money to get there. Let him meet them.

An hon. member: A large-mouth bass.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, I know the minister views his meetings with Atlantic coast fishermen as probably the most important matter on his agenda. Although he is travelling and exceptionally busy, I will, of course, ask him to see if he can make time on this particular trip to meet with the group mentioned by my hon. friend. And, if he has a little more time, I will ask him to have dinner with the hon. member as well.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister and concerns the speech delivered by the Minister of the Environment this morning in Norway at an international environment conference.

The minister said that we must act now and that we must make real commitments. He then talks about next November, and last week in Parliament he talked about 1992 in Brazil.

It is evident that last week's leaked telex from Washington was right. Canada is siding with the Americans and against the countries that want to set real targets and timetables for reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

I ask the Prime Minister, before this conference ends, will Canada take a stand with those nations that want to take action now on the environment?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not know why my hon. friend sees conspiracies behind every little headline.

The role of Canada and its independence on the environment has been lauded by people ranging from Prime Minister Brundtland to Foreign Minister Shevardnadze of the Soviet Union. That is a broad range of compliments.

It is strange that the Liberal opposition cannot once acknowledge the very significant leadership that Canada is providing in the environment, even though it escapes the attention of my hon. friend. I can assure her that she need not bother her head as there is no conspiracy going on. Canada is going to conduct itself with the degree of independence that has brought so much pride to the government of the people of Canada over so many years.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the Prime Minister had the opportunity to re-read his old press clippings.

This is this morning's speech by our Minister of the Environment. It shows very clearly that this government prefers a wishy-washy consensus with the Americans to tough action on global warming.

An hon. member: Shame.

Mrs. Catterall: Why is Canada caving in? Why will the government not stand up with the seven countries who are showing leadership? Why will it not agree to set targets and timetables on carbon dioxide emissions?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, why the repetition of these silly questions that presume that the Government of Canada is not going to do exactly what the minister has very clearly set out? The minister has clearly established the intentions of the government to proceed with timetables and to proceed in a very deliberate and helpful manner.