

## THE SENATE

Tuesday, September 24, 1985

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

### QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

#### BANKING

COLLAPSE OF CANADIAN COMMERCIAL BANK—ALLEGED  
EXISTENCE OF DOCUMENT INDICATING DIFFICULTY—  
CORRECTION OF STATEMENT BY LEADER OF GOVERNMENT

**Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, before we embark on Question Period, I would like to amend a reply that I gave last Thursday in response to a question by the honourable Leader of the Opposition in which he asked me about certain documents that have been requested from the Federal Reserve Board in the United States.

**Senator Frith:** To what page are you referring?

**Senator Roblin:** Page 1256 of *Debates of the Senate*. In answering that question, after advising that the matter had been referred to higher levels of government in the United States, I said:

I am glad to say that the document will be forthcoming. I now have to tell honourable senators that that should read:

I am glad to say that the document may be forthcoming.

Although I had understood an agreement had been reached about the providing of the document, after I had made my statement I was told that that was not the case and that the matter is still under negotiation. However, should it be made available to us, we will be glad to make it available to Parliament.

#### FISHERIES AND OCEANS

SALE OF CANNED TUNA UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION—  
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE—EXTENT OF KNOWLEDGE

**Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I have a few questions for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Since they all request information, I do not expect him to have answers to these questions on the spot. They all deal with the unfortunate events surrounding the canned tuna.

There seems to be some residual doubt as to when the Prime Minister's Office, in particular, first knew about the problems surrounding this canned tuna. Yesterday there were dates mentioned in July and August. I ask the Leader of the

Government in the Senate to attempt to give us more precise information on the dates.

The first date I wish to know is that on which the Prime Minister, or the Prime Minister's Office, first knew anything about the problems surrounding the acceptability of this tuna for human consumption.

As a subsidiary question, if the first time the Prime Minister's Office knew about the problem was in connection with a proposed television show, what information was given regarding what was going to be the subject matter of that television show? I ask that because the Prime Minister said yesterday that when the television show did not appear, he did not look into the matter any further at that time. The question is: Did he know that the show was going to deal with the subject of the tuna being condemned by the inspectors?

May I also ask for the date upon which Star-Kist first made representations to the government through the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, or through the Prime Minister's Office, and who, other than Premier Hatfield, made representations for them or sought an appointment to do so, and the date or dates of any such activity.

The last question is: Did Mr. Fraser, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, as he then was, first refuse to overrule his officials, and was he persuaded to overrule them by the Prime Minister's Office?

**Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I am not entirely sure that I can accept all the questions as posed by my honourable friend, because some of those questions have to do with conversations that might be described as between ministerial colleagues on cabinet matters. So, I would have to enter at least that reservation with respect to the information he seeks.

On first reading, that is the only reservation that occurs to me. I would be pleased to take the other questions as an order for return and I will provide that information as soon as I can.

**Senator Frith:** Honourable senators, on the points raised by the Leader of the Government in the Senate, I understand that his reservation is a reasonable one. I do hope and I am sure he intends me to infer that he will state in any particular case in which he feels the information is not available what the nature of that information is and why it is not available.

#### RESIGNATION OF MINISTER—TRIBUTES

**Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I am not entirely sure whether it is proper to do so, but I cannot let the occasion pass without saying a word in tribute to my former colleague, the Honourable John Fraser. His problems are well known and his difficulties are a matter