

Supply

by the Cabinet in the future. The Minister who just tendered his resignation this morning is the one who was responsible for that. This will go down as the biggest and most deceitful red herring drawn across the trail of those in pursuit of honesty in the history of this country.

Why did the Minister not tell the House and the people of Canada that every cent of funding anticipated in the over-all agreement required his specific approval of each item? Why did he attempt such subterfuge and deceit in the House of Commons?

What is even more disgusting and shocking is the fact that the Minister did not tell the House that another Memorandum of Understanding was signed by him with Magna International on June 14, 1985, when he and the Prime Minister's Government was in office. It was announced in this press release, just one month after the \$2.6 million loan was arranged by his wife, through a numbered company.

[Translation]

Why did the Minister not table this second memorandum as well? What is he trying to hide? Were there other memoranda we have not heard about? Were there other incidents? Question period after question period, will we have to sit here in the House, according to your very narrow interpretation of the Standing Orders, Mr. Speaker. Why did the Minister not make a statement before the House? Why didn't the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), before he left for China, make a statement on his investigation of his Minister's activities?

[English]

This is absolute subterfuge.

The third line of defence was that there was no proof. Yet, the facts have been overwhelming. The media has done excellent research on this matter. There has been no denial by the Minister, no explanation and no statement. Before he left, the Prime Minister said we had to allow the presumption of innocence, that a man was innocent until he was proved guilty.

• (1130)

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You find that offensive.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I do not find that offensive at all. That is quite in order in a criminal matter. This is not a criminal matter, yet—which has nothing to do with the matter of public administration. In public administration a Minister has the burden of proof, the duty to show that what he is doing is beyond reproach. The burden of proof is not on Parliament. It is not on the opposition, nor the media. The burden of proof is on the Minister—

An Hon. Member: And the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney).

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): —to show that his conduct is absolutely beyond reproach. It is obvious that not only was there not proper conduct, there certainly was not an

appearance of proper conduct. The Prime Minister just does not understand the full scope of the issues before us.

The Minister was rendered ineffective. Suspicion engulfs him. He has not spoken. The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen) did not allow him to rise in this House, and I said to the Deputy Prime Minister in Parliament and on the streets that no Minister can delegate his reputation to a Deputy Prime Minister or even to a Prime Minister. No Minister can delegate his reputation for honesty, for integrity and good conduct. The initial mistake made by the Government and the Deputy Prime Minister was not to allow the Minister to rise. Obviously, there is plenty to hide and the Government is going to use the judicial inquiry as a method of trying to keep it away from the purview of Parliament.

The issue before you, Mr. Speaker, is not just a question of bad judgment. The Hon. Member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser) may have exercised bad judgment in the tuna matter but no one in his House ever questioned his honesty or integrity.

An Hon. Member: No?

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Not his honesty nor his integrity. I still hold him in high regard. But this is not just a question of judgment, it is a question of ethics, honesty and comportment in the public affairs of this country.

I think I began speaking at 17 minutes after the hour, Mr. Speaker, and I get 20 minutes so I think I have another five minutes.

Mr. Speaker: Absolutely. I apologize. I had noted 11.16 a.m. The Hon. Member is absolutely right, he has another five minutes.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, this is not merely a question of bad judgment. This goes right to corruption. This is a mingling of the public and private interests. The question Parliament is entitled to ask, and the question Canadians are already asking, is why did the Prime Minister tolerate this for so long? He must have made an independent investigation of where the Minister stood and what were his dealings. If he did not, he was negligent. If he did make these investigations, did he expect he was going to be able to ride this out? Where does the Prime Minister stand? Did he not ask for an inquiry? This issue has contaminated his Government. It has brought his Government into disrepute. It is just another item in a series of events and ministerial conduct which shakes the people's confidence and trust in the Prime Minister and the Government he leads.

We do not know what went on in Korea or China over the weekend. Obviously the Prime Minister's commissars said to him: "Look. This is out of control. We want to clean this up before you come home. It has already pushed you off the front pages and we want you to come home as a hero". That is a joke. They want him to come home a hero from the Chinese and Japanese trip. The Prime Minister is on the Great Wall of