

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I too, have the same kind of respect for the Hon. Member for Carleton-Charlotte who has been ill for some time. I have not followed his movements—

Mr. Tobin: He has a good memory.

Mr. Mulroney:—exactly but my information is that he has not been in Ottawa hardly at all, if at all, since the month of June. But in any case, let me just say this. The Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the New Democratic Party will, I am sure, agree with the basic principle that matters which transpire in caucus are, of course, secret. I will, however, without hesitation, make an exception to that rule today and say that at no time was that matter raised in my caucus by that Member in my presence.

● (1430)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PROCEEDINGS IN CAUCUS

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, lest we misunderstand what the Prime Minister is saying—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ouellet: It might have been raised in caucus while he was not there.

Mr. Nielsen: You clarify it.

Mr. Deans: I'll try. I learned from you. Is the Prime Minister saying categorically that the Member for Carleton-Charlotte did not ever raise that matter in the caucus of the Conservative Party during the period leading up to the time when it became public knowledge on September 18—that he never at any time raised that?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have just said that not only that Member, but no Member, raised that issue in our caucus in my presence.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

CAUCUS INQUIRY

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I left “in your presence” out. I know the Member whom we are talking about very well. Is the Prime Minister saying that, whether or not he was present, at no time did that Member raise that matter in the Conservative caucus prior to September 18?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we have a pretty big caucus.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blaikie: Enjoy it while it lasts.

Oral Questions

Mr. Mulroney: The NDP says “enjoy it while it lasts”. You just keep up this kind of character assassination and you are going to be reduced to zilch in this country. That's what will happen to you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: I will repeat for my hon. friend that I heard of this matter for the first time on Tuesday night of last week.

Mr. Deans: That's not what I asked.

Mr. Mulroney: This matter was never raised by anyone in our caucus at any time in my presence or, I am informed, in the presence of anybody else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO OFFICIAL

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, Sir Walter Scott once wrote:

“Oh, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!”

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Dingwall: I remind the Prime Minister that yesterday he said of Mr. Pat MacAdam:

He got in touch with the Executive Assistant to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and received the assurance that there was no problem.

Today Mr. Pat MacAdam denies that he received any assurances. Will the Prime Minister indicate to the House who was telling the truth; he or Mr. MacAdam?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, with regard to that statement of my hon. friend attributed to Mr. MacAdam, I took the liberty of inquiring of Mr. MacAdam prior to Question Period, and that statement was never granted by him. It is inaccurate.

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Amazing.

STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO MEMBER

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, is the Prime Minister telling the House that the objections in the representations by the Member of Parliament for Carleton-Charlotte were never raised in his caucus? The report says he did raise them in September of last year, not this year.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: Since September of last year.

Mr. Dingwall: Since September of last year.