

FISHERIES

SALE OF CANNED TUNA—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to the Prime Minister who did indicate earlier that he would be prepared at some point to take action in order to get the contaminated tuna off the shelves.

Mr. Fraser: It is not contaminated.

Mr. Broadbent: The Prime Minister said he was taking this matter seriously, and I have a serious question for him. Considering that we do know, and no one is saying that anyone's life is being threatened—no one on this side is saying that—

Mr. Fraser: Well, we got that out of you, anyway.

Mr. Broadbent: No one is saying that. But we do know that—

Mr. Fraser: You have been saying it all day.

Mr. Speaker: Order. If I must admonish one side not to interrupt, I must also admonish the other side.

Mr. Broadbent: We know that lives are not being threatened but we do know that it has been said that this fish is unfit for human consumption and that it could cause elderly people, children, as well as others, to be sick. My question to the Prime Minister is simply this. How many Canadians have to get sick before the Government will take action?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think that my hon. friend would recognize that that is an unworthy question—

Mr. Broadbent: Pardon?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Unworthy.

Mr. Broadbent: Unworthy?

Mr. Mulroney: And it was very much an unworthy question. I have given my hon. friend the assurance that he sought, quite properly, that at no time was there the slightest evidence of danger to health or safety at any time. I further gave him the assurance that as far as I was concerned, and the Government was concerned, any quality matter less than top quality was unsatisfactory. We will be moving in that direction.

I thought that we responded fully and completely to some accusations which may have caused panic and caused hardship and unfair damage to people and to reputations. I have given my hon. friend honestly and openly the full assurance of complete co-operation of the Government that any matter will be resolved on behalf of the ordinary Canadian.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Prime Minister, I say that his response was an unworthy response. If he is going to describe a serious question in those terms, then he deserves to get it back.

Oral Questions

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): I want to ask the Prime Minister a question on behalf of everyone in this House who is serious about the health of Canadians and about the viability of the industry. Since it is now known that the product on the shelf can cause people to bring up, which causes a lot of damage to people's health, as we would understand it, why will he not take action now to preserve the health of Canadians, instead of waiting? That is the question.

Hon. John A. Fraser (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing in any of the information which has been brought to me that justifies the allegation that the Hon. Leader of the Democratic Party is making. No matter how he wants to disguise it, he has now admitted that there is no health problem—

Mr. Broadbent: No.

Mr. Fraser: —but he is trying to create a health problem by using other words. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that the Hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party and those Hon. Members who pursue this line of questioning will have to satisfy themselves, apparently, that there is no health danger in this stock.

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[Translation]

TEXTILES

RECENT CLOSURE OF DOMINION TEXTILE PLANTS AT SAINT-JEAN AND VALLEYFIELD, QUEBEC

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion.

Last week you said that the Government was seeking ways to help the textile industry and that it was about time the industry faced up to the reality of international competition. Would the Minister tell the House how he can possibly reconcile that statement with the recent shutdowns of two Dominion Textile plants in Saint-Jean and Valleyfield?

[English]

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the question of the Hon. Member, what was indicated last week was that we are in a very competitive world. The textile industry in many countries is extremely competitive today and we must accept the reality of the real world, which means that imports can come into this country at a very competitive price. Unfortunately, that is costing Canadian jobs. That is part of the reason the Dominion Textile plants were closed. This Government is now reviewing measures which we might take to relieve the situation.

Mr. Speaker: Before proceeding to petitions' reports, may I simply remind Hon. Members that we are developing an