

I would like to know whether the Prime Minister thinks he can fool Canadians? How does it feel to have a monopoly on truth?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I never claimed to be in secure possession of truth. In answer to a question I simply said that I gave the only answer possible, I told the truth.

My hon. friend blames me for telling the truth! It is unfortunate but I can assure you that the facts as I related them to the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the New Democratic Party were in accordance with the situation—

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● (1500)

[English]

CLERK OF PETITIONS' REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petitions presented by Hon. members on Tuesday, September 24, 1985, meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

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PRIVILEGE

STATEMENT BY RIGHT HON. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I have a very brief question of privilege. I know that as a Cabinet Minister I have to take responsibilities, and I do that. However, I very seriously urge the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) that when he asks questions to not make statements as to so-called facts. I did not know about the tuna issue until Wednesday morning last week. In the preamble to his question he said other than that as a statement of fact, and I would appreciate him staying very close to the facts.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That is not a question of privilege.

Statements by Ministers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND CULTURE

PRESENTATION OF FIRST REPORT

Mr. Gabriel Fontaine (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of tabling, in both official languages, the first report of the Sub-committee on Revision of Copyright, of the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in this report later this day.

[Editor's Note: For above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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THE CABINET

RESIGNATION OF MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, this morning I was informed that I was the subject of an inquiry concerning an alleged violation of Sections 61 and 63 of the Canada Elections Act during the last election campaign, in the riding of Frontenac.

Although no complaint was lodged against me, today I have asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) to relieve me of my duties as Minister of Communications. I made this decision since the prospect that a complaint might be lodged against me would cast doubts on my integrity, which would reflect on the Government. That is why I tendered my resignation to the Prime Minister today.

I am convinced that upon completion of the investigation, my innocence will be established.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MINORITY RIGHTS

ESTABLISHMENT OF LITIGANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Secretary of State of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce today, on behalf of the federal Government, a new and expanded litigant assistance program.

The advent of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has focussed the attention of Canadians and led to a host of projects by volunteer agencies. In the Throne Speech in the fall of 1984, the Government stressed its commitment to social justice and equity for all Canadians, especially for those who,