

*Oral Questions*

● (1415)

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[English]

**FISHERIES****SALE OF CANNED TUNA—PRIME MINISTER'S KNOWLEDGE**

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. I do not want to ask him about tuna. I want to ask him about integrity.

Last week the former Minister of Fisheries and Oceans told the country that the Prime Minister had received detailed information about the rancid tuna in July. Under pressure the former Minister changed his story and he was fired.

This morning the Hon. Member for Carleton-Charlotte, the riding in which the tuna factory in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, is located, contradicted the Prime Minister by saying that since Parliament has reconvened in September he has raised the issue repeatedly in caucus before it became public. Under pressure from Pat MacAdam of the Prime Minister's office, this morning the Hon. Member attempted to change his story. I ask the Prime Minister what he has been asked before. I urge him to take the question seriously and to think carefully before answering.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Does the Prime Minister still hold to the position that he never heard of this affair until one week ago?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**KNOWLEDGE OF OFFICIALS**

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, CTV has reported that Ian Anderson, who was Director of Communications and who is now the Deputy Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, received a transcript delivered to him eight weeks ago with a full account of the story which has since become public. The Prime Minister's caucus liaison officer, Patrick MacAdam, and old college room-mate, and buddy—

**Some Hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** —also knew of the matter in July. Is the Prime Minister asking Canadians to believe that the matter was serious enough to cause the resignation of a Minister of the Crown and yet not serious enough to be told to him by two of the most senior officers in the Prime Minister's Office? Is that what he is asking us to believe?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I am not asking the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition to

believe anything. I was asked a question, one which I have been asked for the last three days while he was absent from the House, and I told the truth. That is what it is, absolutely.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** Mr. Speaker, I have indicated to this House—and I have no need for a period of reflection—under interrogation by my hon. friend, the Leader of the New Democratic Party, and others, that this matter was brought to my attention for the first time on Tuesday night of last week. That is the fact. Any statement at variance with that is false. I have invited anyone who so contends from whatever side of the House to put his seat in play.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**ALLEGATION OF MINISTERS' KNOWLEDGE**

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, we have had a statement by a former Minister and a statement by a Member of Parliament. We have had admissions that the Minister of National Defence knew, that the Minister of Justice knew—

**Mr. Crosbie:** I did not know.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** —and that the Minister of National Health and Welfare knew.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Get your facts straight.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** I am suggesting to the Prime Minister—

**Mr. Dick:** You are wrong again.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with a very serious issue reflecting upon the integrity of the highest office in the land.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** The issue is not fish. We do not have fish before the House any more; we have the possibility of a cover-up.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I would invite the Right Hon. Member to come to his question, please.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians—

**Some Hon. Members:** Order, order.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** —demand to know the truth. Sir, you know this is a very fragile place. If the Prime