

Oral Questions

Fishermen cannot fish. Quotas have been cut by 70 per cent. In the month of May no less than three 10-day closures were imposed in the gulf because of small fish. Many fishermen are in their fourth week without any income.

Will the minister finally admit that this situation is a *de facto* moratorium and come forward now with an appropriate and more substantial aid package?

• (1455)

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Madam Speaker, there is no moratorium of course on the fishery in the area that the hon. gentleman mentions. There was an—

Mr. Milliken: What about a *de facto*?

Mr. Peterson: Kim doesn't agree with you.

Mr. Crosbie: The hon. gentleman opposite is not from a fishing area and he does not know what he is talking about.

Mr. MacKay: But he flounders around a lot. Knock him off his perch, John.

Mr. Crosbie: He is a bit of a flounderer, my deskmate says.

Mr. MacKay: Give him a fair herring, John.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I know that quite a few other members want to ask questions. I think we may gain a lot by having questions shorter and the answer shorter.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is not for the fisheries minister, the fourth we have seen in the last nine years of this government, but to the Deputy Prime Minister in the absence of the Prime Minister.

Like so many other fields of activity in which it has been engaged, this dying government is leaving the Atlantic fishery in a shambles. As he prepares to leave office, along with the Prime Minister, will the Deputy Prime Minister explain to this House how he intends to justify this monumental failure by his government to manage one of Canada's most vital industries?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportu-

nities Agency): Madam Speaker, we certainly realize that this is partisan rhetoric because in the long history of Canada there has never been a period of 18 months where a government committed \$1.2 billion to meet a situation in the fishery not caused by the government but caused primarily by environmental conditions that have affected fish stocks; \$1.2 billion, including \$191 million in the Atlantic adjustment program that the hon. member opposite is scoffing at now. In the long history of Canada it is the greatest amount of assistance to fishermen ever.

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**CANADA-NOVA SCOTIA AGRICULTURE
AGREEMENT**

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley—Hants): Madam Speaker, my question is for the minister of fisheries but it is not on fish. It is in respect to his position in terms of ACOA. Could he please seriously bring us up to date on the status of the Canada-Nova Scotia food agricultural agreement in which so many projects are on hold until we sort out a few problems?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Madam Speaker, I am glad on this occasion to answer a question from a former leadership candidate in our party as a former leadership candidate myself and I believe we are both supporting the same candidate at this particular convention.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Crosbie: Madam Speaker, with reference to the agricultural matters that the hon. gentleman refers to, and he is often of course standing in agricultural matter himself, we are hoping to straighten out the matter of a renewal of an agricultural agreement with Nova Scotia in the next several weeks. There have to be some adjustments as a result of the budget. All members of the House are against the deficit, including the Leader of the Opposition. We are against the deficit. I had to deal with that situation because I am against the deficit and when it is all over we will know who is for the deficit and who is against the deficit and whether or not we can enter into such an agreement.