

Oral Questions

as a member of Parliament interested in the people in his riding or constituency where apparently the petitioner was operating.

Those are the facts that took place.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Table the whole letter.

An Hon. Member: Yes, table it.

Mr. Speaker: The right hon. Prime Minister.

Mr. Mulroney: The reference to that was made by the Leader of the Opposition. I would just point out to him that I believe that most members of the House, if not all, would agree that irrespective of those precedents with which we may or may not agree, the action of the Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport was the proper one.

This is why today I said in a communication which I would be happy to table that I accept his resignation with a genuine sense of sadness. His communication with the court was clearly motivated, not by any desire for gain or favour but rather in the clear belief that he was acting in the best interests of the Canadian sporting fraternity. That he should have offered to resign in these circumstances is an indication of the high regard in which he holds both Parliament and his responsibilities as a minister.

I believe the action of the young Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport is a great tribute to his character. I salute him for it, and I know all members of the House will.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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FISHERIES

Mr. George S. Baker (Gander—Grand Falls): Mr. Speaker, Canadian fishermen do not want to be retrained. They want to fish and they want to know why this government is giving this year, in 1990, not only cod quotas to France but also red-fish quotas to the Soviet Union and to several other foreign countries and Greenland halibut quotas to several foreign countries, all within Canada's 200-mile zone licensed by this government.

Is the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans aware that in the plant which is closing in Trepassey in the minister's riding they process mostly flatfish, things like Greenland halibut, not codfish, and that in Gaultois in the hon.

member's riding where the plant is closing they process all red-fish, not one ounce of codfish.

We want to know why this government has agreed in 1990 to give to the Soviet Union, in zones 3-N and 3-O on the east coast of Newfoundland within 12 miles of our shore, the entire east coast, the NAFO quota, 10,900 tonnes of red-fish, and to give Canadians 300 tonnes less than what the Soviet Union is getting. Canadians want to know why.

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the member for Gander—Grand Falls knows full well that Canadians are welcome to all of the fish stocks within our Canadian 200-mile economic zone that they can harvest on a first priority basis and that fish outside the 12-mile limit do not belong to Canada but are entrusted to our use only when we can use them.

• (1430)

The hon. member is again crying wolf, and as was so aptly pointed out the other day in *The Chronicle-Herald*:

Meanwhile, Mr. Baker's habit of reducing complex problems to the single issue of foreign fishing is neither credible nor useful — no matter how much people in his riding are suffering.

This industry has enough real problems, without inventing new ones.

That is the opinion of *The Chronicle-Herald*, and that is the opinion of many Atlantic Canadians.

Mr. George S. Baker (Gander—Grand Falls): Mr. Speaker, I am of the opinion that this minister probably believes that because it is called "red-fish" it belongs to the Soviet Union; and that because it is called the Greenland halibut it belongs to Greenland; and that American plaice belongs to the United States. There is one fish name that belongs to this cabinet; it is called yellow-tail flounder.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker: It has not a fillet of sole in it.

I want to ask the minister this about zones 2G and 2H, which as you know, Mr. Speaker, the majority of which lie on the Labrador coast. It is the Hamilton Banks, the spawning ground for our northern cod. All of it lies within the 200 mile zone. Why has this government allocated a foreign quota of codfish which increased 11,400 tonnes for this year, up 1,000 tonnes to foreign nations and the Canadian quota down 1,000 tonnes to