

Oral Questions

[English]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, others have done these calculations as well. If the Hon. Member wishes to look at *The Ottawa Citizen*, *The Toronto Star*, and *The Globe and Mail*, he will see that they have gone to accountant firms to ask them to check some of the figures in the tax reform paper. They have found that the tax savings that we have set out in the personal income tax brochure, which is available at all supermarkets and shopping centres for Canadians in all parts of Canada to see, are correct.

The Hon. Member says that sales taxes have increased since 1984. As well, there has been an increase of 840,000 jobs since 1984. That is part of the reason for the increase in sales tax, the increase in economic activity. But it also a reason why we are going to a new sales tax system. I know that the Hon. Member agrees we should go to a new sales tax system. That is the purpose of the second stage of tax reform.

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FISHERIES

CANADA-FRANCE DISPUTE—CANCELLATION OF MEETING

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Considering that France has decided to pull out of negotiations on the fishing dispute between our two countries for the time being, and considering that the Government claimed that those negotiations were a victory for Canada, will the Deputy Prime Minister or the Minister responsible explain to fishermen in Atlantic Canada how the Government is standing up for their rights?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, France has not said that it is pulling out of the negotiations between Canada and France, either on the boundary issue or on the question of fish quotas for France in Canadian waters. France has said that it does not wish to meet on June 24 and June 25 this week because apparently it is peeved that Canada has taken a position that French fishing vessels will not be allowed to use Canadian ports until such time as France agrees to observe proper and reasonable fishing quotas in Zone 3PS, the disputed zone off the south coast of Newfoundland.

When we took that action, opposition Members said that it was hypocritical and ineffective, and members of the New Democratic Party said that we should be sending out the fleet to give the French a lesson. That suggestion was made by the Hon. Rambo Broadbent.

The step we have taken has obviously been extremely effective because since then the French have been attempting to have us change our minds. We will not do so until France ceases its over-fishing off the south coast of Newfoundland.

Mr. Murphy: The Government said that it achieved the meeting as a result of successful pressure on the French Government. This is the only Government that would now say it is successful because the meeting was cancelled.

CANADIAN POSITION

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, we already know from scientific study that the French over-fishing is hurting our stocks and the livelihood of our fisherpersons. What will the Government finally do to stand up for those Canadian fishermen?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I would recommend to the hon. gentleman that he use the word "fisher" if he wants to describe both female fisherpersons and male fisherpersons.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: This is a compromise strongly recommended by my colleague, the former Minister of Employment and Immigration.

It appears to me now that the NDP are suggesting that we should surrender to the French and readmit their vessels to Canadian ports. We will not do that. We are staying steady on the course we have taken. We will negotiate with France and come to a conclusion that is good for the fishermen of Newfoundland, the fishermen of eastern Canada, and good for everyone but the NDP who are trying to sneak in in a by-election in St. John's East.

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TAX REFORM

INCOME TAX—COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. He announced earlier today that the committee will be meeting with finance officials. When does he plan to meet with Canadians from coast to coast who will be very interested and have comments to improve that document where it should be improved?

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs has called on Canadians to submit, for August 18, briefs and suggestions with respect to tax reform concerning the income tax portion of the White Paper. We will then commence detailed hearings in Ottawa, in western Canada and in Atlantic Canada throughout September. Hopefully we will be able to report to the House with respect to the income tax side of the tax reform by November 6. We would appreciate if Canadians would give us their views in order to have the House and Members on all sides of the House understand fully the import of the tax change.