

*Supply*

cut-backs. What about all the boat services that have been cancelled on the south coast of Newfoundland? The Minister should look at how much it will cost him and his family to get over to one of the provinces in eastern Canada since this Government has taken over.

Let me ask the Minister a question. The Minister talked about Fisheries Products International. He said it is now on an even keel. He really took credit for Fisheries Products International. Did the Minister agree with the action taken by the former Government in setting up Fisheries Products International? Did he agree with the amount of money that went into the setting up of that company?

Second, the minister now says everything is fine and dandy. Everything is on an even keel. Is the Minister saying that there will not be any closures of fish plants under Fisheries Products International? That is an interesting question, Mr. Speaker, with the advent of this Government's policy of consolidation in the fishing industry. Will the Minister answer yes or no in this House under this great Fisheries Products International that he claims he has reorganized? Is he saying that all fish plants will remain open, or is he going to relocate the workers?

● (1250)

**Mr. Stevens:** Mr. Speaker, I hope we can keep the record straight, notwithstanding the interventions of the Hon. Member. When I referred to the Cape Breton Development Corporation for the first time in the past decade swinging into a profitable position, I was referring to the fiscal year ended March 31, 1985. The fact is that when we took over in September last year, the company was still operating at a loss. In the last six months to seven months we were able to swing it around, so that we can now say that it is into the black as far as operating figures are concerned. The profit to which I am referring contrasts to a loss the year before, March 31, 1984, of \$49 million. That is the way the previous Government was running this company.

The Hon. Member asked me whether I agreed with their financing plan for FPI. Let there be no doubt what the financing plan was. It was a bail-out for the banks. It was essentially an arrangement to allow the banks to recover moneys which they had advanced. There was very little put up to ensure that the company would be viable and could operate for the benefit of the employees who needed the assistance of FPI to get on with their fishing occupations. That is the truth, and I hope there will be no doubt as far as the House is concerned.

**Mr. Baker:** I would like the Minister to answer the question. Did he agree with the policy of the former Government and the input of some \$100 million in total into that reorganized structure? Did he agree with the actions of the former Liberal Government which the Premier of Newfoundland called the greatest thing since Confederation? Did he agree with the Premier of Newfoundland? When he talks about how great Fisheries Products International now is, is he saying that there will be no closures of plants and no consolidations into other sectors, as the policy statement of this Government indicates?

**Mr. Stevens:** The Hon. Member has raised the question of financing. He mentioned about \$100 million, but he only told half the story. Money went in but it also went out to pay off the banks substantially, as far as their ongoing credits were concerned. In that respect I feel the previous Government was rather naive in what it put together as a refinancing package.

Here again I find the Hon. Member's approach very fascinating. He reflects the interventionist tendency of the previous Government. He wants me to comment on what the present executive or board may or may not be doing with respect to the operation of the company. In due course, because it is more than 50 per cent owned by the people of Canada, we naturally will be reporting back to the House. However, let me assure all Hon. Members that I do not think anything is gained by running commentaries by some politicians as to what they think in a day to day sense should or should not be done in Fisheries Products International. I am pleased that they are back to work, that productivity has risen, and that fishermen once again are able to ply their occupations in the fishery, not listen to a lot of pompous political speeches about what might or might not be possible.

**Mr. Langdon:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the Minister has not made such a pompous speech this morning, in that case. Also I am pleased with the conversion to recognizing the virtues of public enterprise. I suspect some other earth-shaking things to happen in the near future, such as foxes endorsing the virtues of hounds chasing them in the hunt and alligators favouring purse manufacturers. This is a kind of conversion which is so magnificent that I cannot help but congratulate the Minister on it.

However, I want to ask the Minister whether he is now prepared to answer some questions which were raised in the previous debate on Atlantic Canada. These were questions which we posed at the time, coming out of our action group visit to Atlantic Canada. Three of those questions remain particularly relevant. I am talking about the debate on January 25. I might have hoped that the Minister, if he were not indifferent or negligent, would have answered these questions by now.

First, could the Minister tell us whether he is yet prepared to meet the request of workers at Sysco to assist with federal funding to improve productivity and the future export capacity of that company?

Second, is the Minister able to tell me whether an arrangement has finally been worked out with the Woodlot Owners Federation in New Brunswick with respect to reforestation plans there? I talked with the president of that association just two weeks ago, and the Minister had not yet been able to sort out that arrangement.

Third, has the Minister been able to see to it that the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) has reached an agreement with the Canada Works Program in Newfoundland that we stressed, on the basis of groups which talked to us, was not representing employment equity in its