

The 3L cod is part of a single identifiable stock located in Divisions 2JT+3KL. The vast majority of this stock occurs within Canadian jurisdiction. The total allowable catch for the 2JT+3KL cod stock is established by Canada with reference to advice from the NAFO Scientific Council. The total allowable catch, 266,000 tonnes in 1985, has been fully allocated to both domestic and foreign, including EC vessels. Accordingly, unregulated fishing of this stock, without regard for internally accepted scientific advice, jeopardizes the effective management and future health of the stock.

The Minister raised the issue during his recent trip to Europe. It was at this time that the vessels agreed to leave the area. The Minister emphasized the serious potential conservation problem which this overfishing represented. It was agreed that the issue be discussed at the NAFO Scientific Council, which is presently meeting in St. John's. While we will have to await the outcome of the meeting, I believe we can anticipate discussions with the EEC on this matter.

This is a serious problem and, because of the legal uncertainties, we believe it is best to try and solve it in co-operation with the EC.

[Translation]

CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS—CLOSING OF PATENT OFFICE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. David Berger (Laurier):** Mr. Speaker, the decision to close the Patent Office or rather to discontinue patent examination in Canada is probably one of the most absurd decisions this Government has been responsible for since coming to power only a short time ago.

Hon. Members will recall that in its first report which was tabled at the same time as the Budget, the Nielsen Committee had suggested that Canada should sign the Patent Co-operation Treaty, also that it should discontinue patent examination in Canada, and finally that the responsibility for researching patents first registered in Canada should be turned over to an international organization. In spite of the many questions I have directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Côté) and the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen), the Government does not seem to have renounced its project to discontinue patent examination in Canada. We must therefore assume that it is the Government's policy to implement this recommendation.

This proposal has raised the greatest concern among those involved in this area. Last week, I received a letter from a patent solicitor and well-considered lawyer in the Ottawa region, a letter which was made public and which dealt with the impact of such a decision. This gentleman, from the well-known Ottawa firm Fetherstonhaugh, explained to me that Canada, through this decision, was in fact renouncing its technological and industrial sovereignty. This would affect 1,000 jobs in the private sector, in other words people now

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working all across Canada helping inventors file their patents with the Canadian Patent Office.

It must be understood, Mr. Speaker, that 95 per cent of patents registered in Canada originate from abroad. A foreign investor wanting to protect his invention here in Canada must have it registered and make sure that it meets the standards and requirements of Canadian law. Those people from abroad come here in Canada and hire Canadians to help them deal with the Patent Office. The impact of that proposal to abolish screening here in Canada and to transfer it to an international agency in Geneva or Washington would amount to exporting those jobs, because those people, who pay for services provided by Canadians, would henceforth go to Geneva and hire people in Switzerland to do the work now being done by Canadians. This is absolute nonsense.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, it must be remembered that last year, the Patent Office made a \$3 million profit. And because of rate increases introduced by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) last November, the profit forecast for the 1985-86 fiscal year is \$13 million. This means not only that we will be depriving 1,000 Canadians of their jobs, but that we are going to close down an office that in the end is earning some \$13 million for Canadians.

Where could such a proposal come from! The answer is quite simple, Mr. Speaker. There has been no consultation of any kind before it was put forward.

• (1815)

[English]

The president of the Patent & Trademark Institute of Canada was quoted in *The Toronto Star* last week as saying words to the effect that neither he, nor anyone he knows who has anything to do with patents, was consulted prior to making this recommendation. I would remind Hon. Members of what is said at page 1 of the report of the Deputy Prime Minister entitled *New Management Initiatives*. It is stated that the Private Sector Advisory Committee was established to ensure objectivity, and to make consultation an integral part of the process. Yet, here is the president of the patent institute saying that neither he, nor anyone he knows, was consulted prior to the tabling of this decision.

Yesterday, when I put this question to the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen), he told me, and I quote:

[Translation]

The charges which the Hon. Member makes are totally false.

[English]

The information I have presented to the House today is not something I have dreamed up. It is information which was forwarded to me by people at work in this particular field. It is quite curious that the person who wrote to me last week described himself as a frustrated Tory. This is someone who worked for the Conservative Party during the last election, someone who raised funds for the Party, a person who now says that when he calls the office of the Deputy Prime