

that is self-inflicted by his performance this evening in this Chamber.

**Mr. Manly:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Hon. Member for Humber—Port-au-Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin) quoted from two letters. Would he be willing to table those letters in the House?

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sure that the Hon. Member will make the letters available to the Hon. Member for Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands (Mr. Manly), but there is no provision whereby a private Member can file a document in the House.

• (2210)

[Translation]

**Hon. Monique Landry (Minister of External Relations):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to take part in this emergency debate.

There are quite a few rumours going around about the agreement signed in Paris on Saturday, January 24, which is aimed at bringing Canada and France closer to the settlement of a boundary dispute and a dispute concerning fishing activities.

I would like to go back to the causes of the disputes, but first I want to say a few words about this agreement, under which both parties are committed to negotiating two new treaties and to setting dates for the start and finish of negotiations. This is an important point that may have been overlooked in all the commotion that followed the release of the news.

Mr. Speaker, I want to stress that the French have not been offered any quotas of Canadian fish that were not first approved by the industry and provincial representatives at meetings held in Ottawa the week before we left for Paris.

The quotas on which agreement was reached were those established with the industry and the provinces, namely, 3,500 tons of cod in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and 3,000 tons of excess cod in NAFO division 2GH off the northernmost part of the Labrador coast. The 3,500 tons of cod in the Gulf represent average landings by Saint-Pierre et Miquelon fishing boats over the last six years in the Gulf. This approach represents the *status quo*, a solution Canada has been constantly suggesting to France, with the approval of the provinces and the industry. The 3,000 tonnes of 2GH cod off the coast of Labrador, far to the north, are surplus to Canada's needs and according to Government, industry and provincial advisers, constitute a reasonable offer for 1987 to break the deadlock.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this Paris agreement was to break a deadlock that was threatening to become a serious obstacle to settlement of the boundary dispute between Canada and France with respect to territory off the south coast of Newfoundland. A settlement is absolutely necessary to establish Canada's control over cod stocks in the region and to stop over-fishing by French vessels. We have broken the deadlock, and the door is now open to negotiations on the two

treaties I mentioned earlier, and a negotiated settlement of the boundary dispute and the question of French quotas in Canadian waters for the next four years.

The inclusion of a clause stipulating that quotas to be negotiated with France for the period from 1988 to 1991 would include cod quotas from divisions 2J+3KL of NAFO, in other words, the areas off the east coast and the north coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, has created considerable confusion.

I think we should first understand what the agreement means. Mr. Speaker, this agreement means first of all that the Canadian Government agrees with what France has been repeating for a year, which is that it will not accept the proposed quotas for 1988 to 1991. Consequently, the boundary dispute will not be referred to an international tribunal until the proposed quotas have been changed to include codstock from NAFO divisions 2J+3KL.

As I said before, the French have been insisting on this for a long time. Up to now, we have been able to evade the issue while trying to persuade France to accept 1988-91 quotas that would not include cod stock from divisions 2J+3KL. We now realize, and we admitted as much to the French, that they want to retain their position, and as a result, if we wish to settle this boundary dispute, we will have to grant them cod quotas from divisions 2J+3KL.

We should also realize what is not provided in the agreement. Under the Paris Agreement, the Canadian Government is not bound to offer or to agree to offer the French a given quantity of cod from divisions 2J+3KL, if we do not first agree on quotas for 1988-91. French demands may be too excessive for us to be able to agree on quotas for the period from 1988 to 1991. Consequently, referral of the dispute to an international judicial tribunal would merely postpone a settlement, which is not something we desire.

It is also possible that the question is not referred to an international tribunal for some time. Everything, I repeat, everything is negotiable. Nothing has been concluded with respect to the period from 1988 to 1991. Any quotas that may be offered to France within the framework of an agreement for the period in question will be subject to in-depth consultation with the industry and the provincial governments at all stages of negotiations.

That is the Paris Agreement in a nutshell. The Agreement contains a number of auxiliary provisions, including the following: Pursuant to the agreement, until 1987 vessels from St. Pierre and Miquelon will be allowed to continue fishing in areas immediately surrounding the Gulf of St. Lawrence where they have been operating for several years, contrary to the 1972 agreement under which Canada's fishing activities are restricted to a zone which lies within the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This is a kind of *status quo* position taken by the Canadian Government.