

*Oral Questions*

acknowledged that it is a very serious national problem and that the—

**Ms. Clancy:** What are you going to do about it?

**Mr. Mulroney:** Mr. Speaker, I am trying to respond to a serious question. The Minister for International Trade, the Minister of Fisheries and I have pointed out the seriousness of the problem and the resolve of the Government of Canada to aid the Atlantic fishery.

Only a child would suggest that this problem of fish stocks disappearing was created in the last couple of years. Everyone knows, as the professor pointed out this morning, that this is a problem of long standing duration. It is a problem that commands the attention of the nation. We have taken some substantial actions and we propose to take more.

Let me summarize for my friend. When the farmers of western Canada were hurting, this government took action.

**Some hon. members:** They still are.

**Mr. Mulroney:** When Atlantic fishermen are hurting, we will take action as well.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister called for a non-partisan perspective and then cited a report from a previous government.

In the last five years, the overfishing has been permitted to take place. In the last five years, there was a trade agreement signed which eliminated our fish processing rules and eliminated the export tax on fish. All these things were as a result of this particular government. And his friend, the President of the United States, signed a law yesterday banning Canadian lobsters from the American market. I suppose the Prime Minister feels that Kennebunkport lobsters are better than Canadian lobsters. That is what he really thinks.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, in Bas Caraquet the fish packing plant is closed. In Shippagan the plant is in receivership. In Murray Harbour the plant is in receivership. In Tignish the plant is closed. Summer-side Sea Products is in receivership. Canso, North Sydney, Lockeport, Woods Harbour, Port Medway, Port Mouton are all closed. In Newfoundland the great

Avalon peninsula, the northern peninsula, Labrador, the Straits of Belle Isle are all a disaster and this Prime Minister reacts the way he does in the House of Commons. He ought to be ashamed.

**Some hon. members:** Shame, shame!

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, my question is simple. What is the Prime Minister of our country going to do about the collapse of the Atlantic Canadian economy, the collapse of the Atlantic Canadian fishery? They were doing just fine before this government took office and the Prime Minister ought to recognize that.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** Mr. Speaker, two matters have been raised. The province of New Brunswick is leading the country in terms of investment and the Premier of New Brunswick says that the economy of the province of New Brunswick is doing better than it has ever done before.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Some hon. members:** That's because it's a Liberal government.

**Mr. Mulroney:** The Premier of Prince Edward Island has produced a balanced budget, in large measure due to the assistance provided by the Government of Canada.

Since Newfoundland and Labrador has been admitted into Confederation there has never been such assistance, on a per capita basis, by the Government of Canada to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** Unemployment in all but one of the four Atlantic provinces is down dramatically today from where the Liberals left it in 1984.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** And the spectacle of the Leader of the Opposition, responsible for that chaos, suggesting that the fish stocks have gone away overnight because of this government is unworthy of the Leader of the Opposition. I have said that the kinds of broad, general, generous approaches that we brought in to help the western farmer will be in place to help the Atlantic