

Oral Questions

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The French have clearly indicated that they will continue to overfish the stock. They will not abide by the quota we have given them. St. Pierre and Miquelon are small islands. They have clearly indicated the tough position they are prepared to take with the French. Could the Minister tell the House and the people of eastern Canada—the whole country—what specific action he will take, or will he substitute a wishbone for a backbone?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, when the time comes, the Hon. Member and all other Members of the House will witness appropriate and necessary actions on behalf of the fishermen of Atlantic Canada. I cannot help but speculate that opposition Members are somewhat fearful that we might indeed find a solution to this problem; then they would have no more basis for their irrelevant questions.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER TAKE ACTION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same Minister. We have already given him a proposal, a positive suggestion, to start over with the agreement. I want the Minister to be more specific with the House. Will he wait until there are absolutely no fish left to be fished by Canadian fishermen, or will he start delineating the action the Government intends to take and to send a strong message to France that they cannot overfish stocks belonging to Canadians?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the Hon. Member would permit us to wait a day or two, because these French trawlers about which he is concerned certainly would not even contemplate coming to Canadian ports in the foreseeable future. The Hon. Member has indicated that they have offered options. Yes, indeed, Rambo, the Leader of the NDP, offered a solution the other night. Is the Hon. Member suggesting that we move into this disputed zone with a show of force by Canada? Is that what he is recommending? If so, I wish they would declare themselves now.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ADMINISTRATION

BRODILAF-HAMA AFFAIR—NEED FOR INQUIRY

Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works. Yesterday, the Prime Minister asked me for facts. I would like to say that because of political pressure, one bidder, Mr. Michel Côté, withdrew his bid; that according to

the Chief of Staff of the Minister of Public Works, the first tender was cancelled because Brodilaf, a Conservative company, did not legally qualify; that one Conservative was convicted of influence peddling and finally, that officials with the Department of Public Works recommended Hama Inc., whose offer was \$65,000 lower than the offer made by the Conservative group.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Public Works: What more does the Government need to realize this was not normal procedure and that a public inquiry is urgently needed?

• (1440)

[English]

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, a recommendation was made by the public servants to me as Minister concerning this contract. The proposal was put to Treasury Board for approval and such approval was given. The result was the awarding of a contract to Brodilaf because it represented the best deal in the circumstances.

[Translation]

ALLEGED PRIVILEGED KNOWLEDGE OF CERTAIN FACTS

Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary with some more facts for the Minister and the Prime Minister. I have here a document which originates from the office of the Hon. Member for Drummond, dated May 7, 1986, in which he refers to a meeting with Public Works and his scrutiny of studies prepared by their officials. How can the Minister justify a Conservative Member having access to such documents four months before the final decision and the signing of the contract? How can the Government claim everything was above board when there was this kind of political interference?

[English]

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I have absolutely no knowledge of what documents any Member of this House had relative to this contract. I can say that the contract was awarded on the basis of the principles governing awards of contracts. It was for best value and it received Treasury Board approval. I have reviewed the file and am thoroughly persuaded that the appropriate course of action was followed.

* * *

THE ADMINISTRATION

GOVERNMENT INTEGRITY

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. It was nice to spend at least a few moments at the beginning of Question Period without talking about scandals. However, the Deputy Prime Minister will know that the people of Canada have