

practising political rhetorical excesses in an attempt to gain points?

Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary for the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance said this government is getting the fundamentals right. I would suggest that the Minister of Finance talk to the 1,000 people who are out of work in Fishery Products International in Atlantic Canada, to those at Sears Canada where 800 jobs were lost in Atlantic Canada; Dominion Textiles where 330 jobs were lost; St. John's Shipbuilding where 250 jobs were lost, and so on.

I ask the minister, can Canadians expect to see some hope? Can Atlantic Canadians expect to see some hope in the budget which this government will bring forth and what is it going to do for those Canadians that its policies have put out of work?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, the people in Atlantic Canada can see all around them the tremendous efforts being made by this government to create employment in Atlantic Canada.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Crosbie (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, noise is not going to drown out the truth, no matter how loudly the opposition shouts.

Just to give an example, in the last several years we have had an action program of ACOA. In the province of Newfoundland, 1,580 projects were assisted with \$169 million, creating and maintaining over 17,000 jobs, not to mention the Hibernia project with a government commitment of \$2.7 billion and hundreds of millions more committed to the fishery, just in one of the Atlantic provinces. That is a fine record, and one that I am proud to support.

• (1430)

Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have seen the fish go to Portugal, Spain and France. They have seen the jobs go to the United States and nothing for Atlantic Canadians.

[Translation]

Fishermen are in the same dreadful situation as farmers. Government has been warned. If it agrees to do away with marketing boards at the GATT negotiations,

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thousands of family farms will disappear and, with them, thousands of jobs. I ask the Deputy Prime Minister this: Is he prepared to sign that kind of agreement? If so, how will he make sure that all these farms will survive and all these jobs will not be lost?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and several of my colleagues were meeting with farm leaders just minutes ago. First, the Prime Minister has reaffirmed that the Canadian position is unchanged and that we will continue to vigorously support our farm product marketing boards.

At the same time, we have invited our farm leaders to take part in a European mission to meet with their European counterparts, to call upon both the political and farm leaders of these countries for support. Our proposal has been relatively well accepted. As a matter of fact, we are planning to meet again in a few minutes, after Question Period, with a hundred or so Canadian farm leaders gathered in an Ottawa hotel to discuss this issue further. I am happy to see that farm leaders and government are finally realizing that we have but one position and that we need to stand united if the Canadian position is to be successfully endorsed.

[English]

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Ocean.

I want to put another perspective on this foreign overfishing. The year 1991 will go down on record, a 15-year record, for being the year with the worst catch for Atlantic fishermen and the best catch for foreigners fishing the same stock, the worst of times for Canadians and the best of times for foreigners. That contrast is shocking. The comparison is atrocious and shameful, and I think the conclusion is very clear. Something has to be done now.

I do not care what the minister says. It is a question of political will. When will this government have the political will to stop talking and start acting?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, I understand that the hon. member represents a great many fishermen. I can