

*Oral Questions***AGRICULTURE**

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, it should be clear.

If the hon. member would care to look at the record of all the efforts the government is deploying to stop the overfishing, if he would look at the reality of the overfishing in Atlantic Canada, he would see the steps that have been taken by all levels of government and by the industry in Europe to try to stop this overfishing.

We have not succeeded completely, but the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is always trying to convince the EEC to stop overfishing and respect the environmental concerns of Canada in the North Atlantic.

The hon. members says that we allow foreigners. The hon. member should come clean with Canadians and tell them that no foreign trawlers are allowed within the 200-mile limit off Canada, except according to the rules set by NAFO, and that is the reality.

**Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to direct my supplementary question to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans who, when he announced the aid package for Newfoundland and Labrador and the Atlantic region last week, stressed very much that the failure of the fishery was due solely to environmental problems.

If this is so, how can he account for Soviet fishermen giving evidence to Newfoundlanders on Soviet overfishing in our own waters, and how can he account for the rage, the anger and the frustration of the Newfoundland fisherman who cannot fish 45 miles off their own coasts in area 3NO without being arrested. More particularly, Mr. Speaker, what does he intend to do about it?

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, is away on duty. You know, it is great to stand up and grandstand in the House. What he is not telling the fishermen in Atlantic Canada and in Newfoundland and Labrador is that the reason why the quota in 3NO from about two years previous was 46,000 tonnes and has been dropped to approximately 13,000 tonnes was for conservation reasons.

Maybe the Liberal Party is in favour of letting fishermen raid the resource and kill it. We are not.

**Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. The compensation payment for PVY-N for last year's crop has not yet been completed. Farmers have been waiting for over a year and a half.

The application forms for the 1991 crop are not yet available. What I want to know, Mr. Speaker, is when will the application forms be available. I especially want to know if the funds are in place to immediately respond to the losses, or will the P.E.I. potato producers have to wait until next year again.

**Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, payments for last year to date are over \$9 million. There are some 36 applications for assistance that have not been processed because there were some problems in filling out those forms for 1990.

We have established an action committee in Prince Edward Island of the stakeholders, producers, provincial government, federal representatives. They are the group that is working to provide an application form for this year's assistance.

I can assure the hon. member that the dollars to address this concern, as I said when I met with the premier of Prince Edward Island in Saskatoon and established the process, are available from the Government of Canada.

**Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, I hope the grain farmers of the west do not have to wait as long as the potato farmers of Prince Edward Island for their compensation.

I have a question for the same minister. Preliminary re-testing results of the supposedly infected fields showed an 80 per cent error rate. Potato fields were destroyed for absolutely no reason. The minister's department has been re-testing for the past several weeks. They admit this now publicly.

What I want to know, Mr. Speaker, is what are the results of the re-tests being carried out over the past number of weeks. Can the minister now tell the P.E.I. farmer what is actually going on.

**Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, when the virus was discovered in Prince Edward Island last fall, the plants were in the tuber stage. This year we have gone through a testing process that was agreed to. I want to emphasize to the hon. member that it was agreed to by the Province of Prince Edward Island and their scientists and by the Government of Canada and our scientists in a protocol.