

Oral Questions

which gave the French the right to take thousands of tonnes of fish in Canadian waters. He now has the audacity to get up and question our firmness, when we have closed Canadian ports to French fishing vessels, we have closed the Burgeo Bank to French fishing vessels, and we have closed all areas of 3PS outside the disputed zone to French fishing vessels.

On October 9 we told the French there would be no quotas in Canadian waters under the 1972 treaty, given to France by the Leader of the Opposition and his Government in 1972. There will be no quotas next year unless they show that they are reasonable and reach an agreement with us.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): The Minister responsible for Newfoundland has just inaccurately rewritten history. In his statement he just conceded to France Canadian sovereignty over the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

INQUIRY WHETHER PRIME MINISTER CONTACTED FRENCH PRIME MINISTER

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised to solve this problem with President Mitterand of France. He did not. The Prime Minister promised to solve the problem with Prime Minister Chirac of France. He did not. The Prime Minister of Canada promised to solve the problem at the Economic Summit, and then at the Francophone Summit. He did not.

My supplementary question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Has the Prime Minister of Canada called Prime Minister Chirac within the last 24 hours to ask him exactly what he meant about this thinly veiled threat to Canada and what he means in refusing to stop the illegal French fishing, now to the limit of 36,000 tonnes, in our waters? Has our Prime Minister been in touch with the Prime Minister of France?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think we might ask the Leader of the Opposition if he has been in touch with the Leader of the Liberal Party in Newfoundland who said that Canada is offering unreasonably small amounts of codfish to the French in 2J3KL. Has he been in contact with Mr. Wells on that question? I do not think he has.

With respect to the question of France, we are negotiating with France because we want to settle the question of how much fish is to be caught in the disputed area of 3PS. In that negotiation we have had no help from the Hon. Members opposite who have continued their contrived hysteria.

The Leader of the Opposition wants to tear up the free trade agreement with the United States before it is written. Why does he not want to tear up the agreement he entered into with France in 1972? Is that his next tear-up? What does he suggest to settle this matter?

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I think the people of Newfoundland will find the Minister's answers totally

unacceptable this afternoon. We have been in touch with Clyde Wells, and he wonders why the Minister does not get off his butt and protect the fishermen in Newfoundland.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1425)

UNACCEPTABLE THREAT AGAINST CANADA

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Because I might, in the current circumstances, get a sensible answer, I want to return to the Deputy Prime Minister. The answers so far are simply not good enough. Cut it anyway you want, the Prime Minister of France has made an unacceptable threat against Canada. Our Prime Minister has not responded appropriately in the circumstances.

I ask the Deputy Prime Minister will the Prime Minister tell Prime Minister Chirac that if he thinks or even dreams of carrying through his thinly veiled threat that the consequences, in diplomatic terms, will be unacceptable to him?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition knows all about butts. He has had his hands on more butts than there are Members in this House.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: With reference to the Leader of the Liberal Party in Newfoundland, I will quote what he said on the CBC last night:

The EEC is giving up their share, some 9,500 tonnes,—

Which the Liberals gave the EEC in 1980.

—that quantity can be used to bargain reasonably with France and give France a significant portion of that 9,500 tonnes and try and bargain reasonably without in any way impacting on the inshore fisheries or the Canadian fisheries in the area.

That is what the Leader of the Liberal Party in Newfoundland said.

With respect to Prime Minister Chirac, there has been no threat from the Prime Minister of France. I will tell you what the Prime Minister said—and I know him personally—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: He expressed his disappointment at the attitude of the Canadian authorities—we are too tough for them—which was delaying progress, he said, in the negotiations. He pledged that French boats would be able to carry on fishing in waters within French sovereignty “under the best possible security conditions”.

It was the hon. gentleman's Government in June of 1984 which entered into an arrangement with France so that we would not interfere with its navy vessels when they went into disputed waters, the 3PS. Has he forgotten that now? He was in office for such a short period, I suppose he cannot remember these little incidentals.