

*Oral Questions*

of the fishery and to the benefit of Canadian fishermen throughout Atlantic Canada.

**Mr. Broadbent:** I would add, all being done at the expense of the people of Newfoundland.

## EXTENT OF CONSULTATIONS

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, the Government has made much of the need for process in reaching decisions. The industry, the unions, and the Government of Newfoundland were part of all the discussions up until the December meeting. Why were those central players in this decision cut out entirely when the Government entered into this secret deal with the Government of France?

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Speaker, the agreement does not exceed conditions which have been the subject of extensive negotiations with the Government of Newfoundland and the industry. It will assure once and for all an end to the blatant overfishing by France in this disputed zone. I must add that the benefit to be received by Atlantic fishermen by the ending of this overfishing will far exceed any modest cost to get France to sit down and negotiate this very important question.

**Mr. Broadbent:** If the Minister contacts Newfoundland now he will find that all over the province on radio programs they are conducting a referendum on Confederation as a result of the incompetence and insensitivity of the Government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT WITHDRAW FROM AGREEMENT

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport, who is snickering over there, has publicly expressed opposition to the process of this agreement. The industry, the fishermen, and the Government of Newfoundland are all opposed. Therefore, will the Government now give us its assurances that it will not make an agreement with France on this important matter unless it has the support of the people of Newfoundland?

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the NDP may never come to realize that from time to time Governments must take difficult decisions and act. In this case we will be able to demonstrate very clearly, as these negotiations proceed, that a substantial long-term benefit will accrue to all of the fishermen of Newfoundland and Atlantic Canada if a successful conclusion is reached on this very difficult problem.

● (1425)

I might add that in the process of this negotiation not one fish, not one additional benefit, has been given away by Canada.

## GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, to conserve fish stocks the Government banned Canadians from fishing on the Nose of the Banks; to conserve fish stocks the Government restricted Canadians from fishing on the south coast of Newfoundland; and to conserve fish stocks it has reduced the fishing quotas for Canadians in the northern cod stock. Since all that was done to conserve fish stocks, I ask the Minister of Fisheries why the Americans are allowed to fish the Nose of the Banks, the French, unrestricted, on the south coast of Newfoundland, and now, worst of all, we learn of quotas being given to the French in the northern cod stock. Is it because the word "conserve" to the Government means to con Canadians and to serve foreigners?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Speaker, if I might be permitted a response, in June of last year a number of important initiatives were taken and announced by the Government to protect Canada's sovereignty and to ensure a strengthening of our vigilance and our surveillance of the resources along our 200 mile limit. The remaining unresolved problem is to remove this irritant of an unresolved boundary dispute with France and blatant overfishing. I might add again that we have not given one additional fish, by way of a commitment to France, to achieve the signed agreement which is being announced today.

**Mr. Baker:** To have this Minister representing Canadian fishing interests in negotiations with the Americans and with the French is like having a jellyfish in with a bunch of sharks.

## ALLOCATION OF QUOTA TO FRENCH VESSELS

**Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, can the Minister explain to Canadian fishermen why he has asked them to conserve the cod resources in the northern cod stock and reduced their fishing quotas, while at the same time a major policy change was being made in secret, behind the scenes, to give a foreign country a quota in that very zone? Does he think the Canadian fishermen will swallow that hook, line, and sinker? They will not, you know.

**Some Hon. Members:** Resign.

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Speaker, once again the Opposition does not want to hear the response. It would do well for the Hon. Member and the opposition Party which was in government to reflect on all the reasons that led to Canada being in this unsatisfactory state where French trawlers are blatantly overfishing in the disputed area. We have now achieved an agreement, an agreement whereby that boundary decision will be referred to international third party arbitration, solving once and for all a problem, and bringing untold benefits to Newfoundland fishermen.