

want to condone it either. This is federal land and this is a federal bank.

[Translation]

**Mr. René Cousineau (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)):** Madam Speaker, I would like to point out to the Hon. Member that asking Government officials to stop this discrimination would be asking them to stop something that does not exist. However, if the Hon. Member would care to provide concrete examples, these will be looked into and the Minister will be duly informed.

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[English]

### FISHERIES

#### RESTRUCTURING OF INDUSTRY IN NEWFOUNDLAND

**Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The Minister met with his Newfoundland counterpart last week and the subject of discussion, of course, was the question of restructuring. The Minister knows that there are at least six important deep-sea plants in Newfoundland that are still down, awaiting this critical decision. Has the Minister reached an agreement with the Government of Newfoundland on restructuring and, if so, will he tell the House or will we have to wait and learn from the press?

**Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Madam Speaker, I have to tell the Hon. Member that I will have the pleasure of meeting with the Minister of Fisheries for Newfoundland and Labrador in Ottawa tomorrow morning on precisely that topic.

**Mr. McGrath:** Madam Speaker, the Minister knows that justice delayed is justice denied. Newfoundland has approximately one in four people unemployed. These deep-sea plants are critical in terms of the number of jobs involved. The trawler fleet that services these plants, and the inshore fishermen are awaiting this critical decision.

#### REQUEST THAT ANNOUNCEMENT BE MADE IN HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Madam Speaker, may I ask the Minister if he will announce tomorrow a decision has been made on restructuring, so that the plants may know their future? I know the Minister is a House of Commons man. Will he extend to us the courtesy of coming to the House and making that announcement?

**Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Madam Speaker, obviously either way, particularly if there is an agreement, I will be most pleased to advise the House. I can already assure the Hon. Member, however, that the federal

### Oral Questions

Government is committed to establishing in Newfoundland not only a very healthy structure but also that the number of people, in total, who make their living from the fishery in Newfoundland will not suffer any substantial decrease.

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### THE ADMINISTRATION

#### ROLE OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IN PRESENTATION OF GOVERNMENT CHEQUES

**Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North):** Madam Speaker, my question is supplementary to that posed by the Leader of the Opposition to the President of the Treasury Board with respect to this interesting circular on the presentation of Government cheques.

In the past, on occasion the Government has given cheques from a Ministry to a Member of Parliament to deliver. This circular seems to indicate that, once a Minister has approved it, the cheque will go direct to the Member of Parliament. Can the President of the Treasury Board assure the House that these cheques will be delivered to all Members of Parliament, irrespective of political Party? Is this going to be conducted on a straightforward basis, or does the Government intend to pick and choose between its supporters and other Members of Parliament?

**Hon. Herb Gray (President of the Treasury Board):** Madam Speaker, first of all I should like to thank my hon. friend for confirming that in the past there have been occasions when cheques have been presented to groups by MPs on behalf of Ministers in a formal sense. The situation described in the circular is not entirely a new departure.

Second, I would have to say to my hon. friend that whether any cheques are delivered by MPs and which MPs would be involved are strictly a matter for the responsible Minister. The Ministers may well decide to continue with the previous practice or to follow the new circular. It is up to the Ministers to decide which MP they wish to ask.

#### INQUIRY RESPECTING POSSIBLE USE FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES

**Mr. G. M. Gurbin (Bruce-Grey):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister. Is it Treasury Board policy to allow these cheques to be used by Liberal partisans for partisan political purposes?

**Hon. Herb Gray (President of the Treasury Board):** Madam Speaker, the circular makes no reference to partisans of any particular Party, or to any Party at all. It simply says that, if the responsible Minister agrees, individual cheques or cheques of a particular class can be sent by the chief financial officer of the Department to the MP or MPs the responsible Minister has designated as being able to present the cheques on his or her behalf.