

a preliminary way. Certainly he should not be disappointed as we proceed. As I have been doing thus far, we will be making announcements about the results of the task force on program review when they are ready.

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[Translation]

#### SMALL BUSINESS

REQUEST THAT PLANT BE REOPENED IN DESBIENS, P.Q.

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Small Businesses. At the pulp and paper plant in Desbiens, a town in the Lac-Saint-Jean area, 125 employees are still waiting for the Prime Minister to keep his election promise to settle the problems besetting this plant, which has been closed for nearly four years. Mr. Speaker, my question is as follows: Two months ago, I asked whether the Government would grant the financial assistance requested by the company and the employees, and today, I ask the Minister to inform the House when he is going to make a decision and whether the decision will be a positive one for these unemployed workers.

**Hon. André Bissonnette (Minister of State (Small Businesses)):** Mr. Speaker, the Desbiens plant submitted a proposal not long ago. It is now being examined, and as is the case for all proposals received by the Government, we take the time to analyze them, especially those coming from the pulp and paper sector. We are looking at all the implications, and we will make a decision as soon as possible.

#### GOVERNMENT POSITION ON ELECTION PROMISE

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister said the same thing two months ago in the House. His party and his boss made an election promise last July. Could the minister inform the House today when he is going to take action and do something about this problem, or does the minister intend to break another election promise?

**Hon. André Bissonnette (Minister of State (Small Businesses)):** Mr. Speaker, we do not intend to break any election promises. We are considering the matter, and as the House is aware—

**Mr. Nystrom:** Considering, always considering—

**Mr. Bissonnette:** —as you know, the Prime Minister made no formal commitment to start up the plant again—

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Bissonnette:** —but asked the plant to submit a project. We are looking at this case, and one thing is certain, namely that all job creation projects are considered very carefully, and

that this Government intends to create jobs in Quebec the same as anywhere else in Canada.

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[English]

#### FISHERIES

##### CODFISH—SIZE OF WEST GERMAN CATCH

**Mr. George Baker (Gander-Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, an international agreement between Canada and the EEC is being blatantly violated by a member country of the EEC. My question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. There are 9,500 tonnes of codfish allocated to the EEC in Area 2J3KL, recognized by international agreement as Canadian jurisdiction, a Canadian resource within and without the 200-mile limit. The West German fleet has already caught three times that quota, and it is still fishing today. What is the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans doing about that?

**Hon. John A. Fraser (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Speaker, the matter raised by the Hon. Member is serious. I have now received some preliminary information concerning it. I will take very careful notice of the representations of the Hon. Member. I hope I will be able to give him a response by at least this time tomorrow.

• (1500)

#### GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. George Baker (Gander-Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, I have a feeling that action is being muzzled by those who are staging the Prime Minister's Hollywood production in West Germany today.

Could the Minister verify to the Chamber that he could, if he wanted to, close ports, impose sanctions, or terminate the entire agreement with the EEC? Does the "old pal" attitude take precedence over the fishery of the country?

**Hon. John A. Fraser (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Speaker, I could do all of the things the Hon. Member wishes me to do, but until we have a much better and more complete understanding of the facts, it would be completely irresponsible. I told the Hon. Member that I have now received notice of the problem and that I hope that I will be able to respond effectively and in a reasonable way by this time tomorrow.

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#### CLERK OF PETITIONS' REPORT

**Mr. Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Saskatoon East