

*Oral Questions*

surveillance capacity, and even engaged in high seas pursuit of foreign fishing vessels in order to stand up for the rights of Atlantic fishermen. I can assure the hon. gentleman that in this case we will do likewise if such is required.

## REQUEST FOR REOPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the gumption of the people of St. Pierre and Miquelon will the Minister immediately reopen the negotiations with metropolitan France and seek a renewal of terms from France on the fishing rights in the Gulf, and rehabilitate the Canadian fishermen from all four Atlantic Provinces who have been grievously harmed by the inappropriate negligence of the Minister and his colleagues?

● (1425)

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Speaker, if the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition had partaken of the detailed briefings, which all Premiers did on Monday night in Toronto, and which other members of his Party have done, then perhaps he would see the question that he has just asked in a different light. The consequence of the Monday evening meeting was not a request from Atlantic Premiers that the agreement signed with France on January 24 be torn up. I believe that they know more than the Hon. Leader of the Opposition of the potentially more serious consequences for Canada if that were done.

## OVERFISHING BY FRENCH VESSELS

**Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, the quotas for Canadian fishermen on the East Coast have been substantially reduced in certain sectors this year for the first time in our history, and there is restricted entry for Canadian fishermen to the south coast of Newfoundland. Today in the newspaper the Minister of Fisheries is quoted as saying, "6,400 tonnes (quota) is the historical share to which the (French) fleet is entitled". Is the Minister aware that, according to the official fillet figures of St. Pierre and Miquelon, that entire quota has been substantially overfished by the French fleet? What is the Minister going to do today to stop this overfishing by the French?

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** What we are doing today, and the process in which we are engaged as a result of the January 24 agreement, is to find a solution once and for all to the disputed boundary problem which was initially created as a consequence of a treaty that his Government signed in 1972.

I might point out that the historical entitlement of vessels based in St. Pierre and Miquelon is not to be confused with the fishing practices of large trawlers that come from metropolitan France which can only be arrested by way of an international agreement, or force.

## NON-ARREST OF FRENCH VESSELS

**Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate):** The Government is not interested in the prevention of overfishing by the French. It is more interested in the prevention of poaching in Paris. If a Newfoundland boat exceeds its quota, it is arrested. A Nova Scotia boat, a New Brunswick boat, a Prince Edward Island boat, and a Quebec boat will also be arrested. The same applies to the Americans, the Spanish, and the Portuguese. Why are the French boats not arrested for overfishing? Does the Government have Falklands phobia?

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** I am sure that the Hon. Member for Gander—Twillingate must spend his entire mornings practising these neat little couplets that he loves to present, while totally obfuscating the issue in each and every case.

The Hon. Member knows, or he should know, and perhaps he should have another briefing to bring him up to date, that in the disputed zone, under international protocols which his Government entered into in 1984, we are not able to confront France in waters which they claim to be theirs. Until the boundary dispute is resolved by a civilized procedure, which has been set in motion, that practice will continue—unless the Hon. Member is suggesting that we send in the Canadian navy. I hope he is not suggesting that.

## FRANCE'S POSITION ON COD ALLOCATION

**Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. The French Government has again shown complete contempt for a Canadian Government that is unwilling to stand up for the rights of Canada. France has said that it will take four times the allocation of cod that has been granted to it by the Canadian Government. I wish to ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action his Government is prepared to take to stand up for the rights of Canadians, or is it simply prepared to let the French Government continue to kick sand in our face?

● (1430)

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Speaker, the action we are prepared to take is not unlike the action we were prepared to take on another issue, that dealing with the offshore energy problems of Newfoundland and Labrador, where we promised, as the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition indicated yesterday, a fair deal, a new deal, and a better deal for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. I can undertake to the House that if we do not, by the end of the process set in place, arrive at a fair deal, a new deal, and a better deal for the fishermen of Newfoundland and Labrador, there will be no deal.

**Mr. Manly:** It had better be a better deal than what has appeared so far.