

Adjournment Debate

My hon. colleagues have referred to the various forms of discrimination to which Chinese Canadians were subjected. Yet, these Canadians fought back. They fought for their rights and for the welcome they deserved in their new land. Their struggle was carried out with patience, dignity, and persistence.

In 1922, in British Columbia, the Chinese Benevolent Association, led a year-long school boycott to protest against the policies of white supremacists in the Victoria school board. It ended when the board finally re-admitted Chinese pupils into the public schools. This incident was similar to many other measures that Chinese Canadians undertook to defend themselves. For example, in 1881, Chinese railway workers protested when a labour contractor tried to take a higher commission from their wages.

In 1916, the Chinese Labour Association was formed in British Columbia. The organization was tested in 1919 when local shingle mill owners attempted to roll back wages. The workers formed the Shingle Workers Association, struck for 40 days, and preserved their wage levels. Even in this instance, organized labour in Canada, 70 years ago, was discriminatory. The Trades and Labour Congress of Canada regularly passed anti-Chinese resolutions up until the 1920s, but Chinese Canadian workers eventually improved their conditions.

A significant role was played in protecting Chinese Canadians from racism by the Chinese Benevolent Association, formed in 1884, after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

• (1800)

Madam Deputy Speaker: Unfortunately I will have to interrupt the hon. member. The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1) the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

I understand there were discussions earlier and there was unanimous consent to call it ten o'clock at this time. Is that still agreeable?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

FISHERIES

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Madam Speaker, my general subject today will come as no surprise to you—it is fish, just as you thought. My particular subject has to do with the people in many parts of rural Newfoundland who are being pulverized because of the current situation in the fishery.

I gave notice some time ago that I was dissatisfied with an answer given to me by my friend from St. John's West, the Minister for International Trade, who was on that day speaking for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans who was away from the House on government business.

As you will know, Madam Speaker, under our procedures if we are not satisfied with an answer we can rise at this particular time. I rise because I am very dissatisfied with the answer the minister from St. John's West gave me that day.

First, let us note what day it was he gave that answer. It was February 13, four months and one day ago. I was asking before that and I have asked since that, but with respect to today's proceeding, four full months ago in this Chamber I asked my fellow Newfoundlander from St. John's West if he would come to the aid of those people in those small communities who are trying to protect a way of life, to hold on, to cling onto a lifestyle. They are trying, in the more immediate, to find enough money to put groceries on the table. Their fisherfolk, both men and women, are going out in the boats from places on the Port au Port Peninsula along the southwest coast in Fortune Bay and Placentia Bay, from communities like Garnish, François, Harbour le Cou, Petites, McCallum and many others along that coast.

These people, over the years, have gone out fishing and come back with a full boatload, a bumper load, as we say. These same people have been going out these past few months and not catching enough fish to pay for the cost of preparing to go out—the cost of the bait, of operating the motor, of the gasoline; let alone finding enough profit in that undertaking to buy the groceries,