

As the hon. member knows, there is a commission, made up of interested nations, that meets each year on the North Atlantic. The annual meeting of the North Atlantic Fisheries Commission is attended by the Russians, West Germans, Poles, Americans and ourselves. The last meeting was held in St. John's, Newfoundland, in June of this year. Each year all countries fishing in the North Atlantic meet to compare notes with regard to catch over the years and their estimates of the sustainable yield of the North Atlantic.

I have stated on several occasions that we are coming perilously close to the point of overfishing, the point at which the total catch can drop dramatically. All the nations I referred to are aware of this fact. There have been negotiations which have resulted in quotas being established, particularly at Georges Bank, off Nova Scotia. We have yet to establish an agreed sharing of a sustained yield operation in other areas, particularly off the Grand Banks. This is another objective of ours. We have this commission and are talking to the Russians in that forum. We have been carrying out, particularly on Georges Bank, an investigation of the herring resources, for example, with the United States and the U.S.S.R. We are meeting them there as well.

The hon. member is quite right that the resource is under serious pressure. The typical catch of an inshore fisherman today is half what it was ten years ago. The only bright aspect has been an increase in the price of his product, otherwise he would be in very bad shape indeed.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS—NON-PAYMENT OF
MINIMUM WAGE—DISCUSSION BY MINISTER OF
TRANSPORT WITH PRESIDENT

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, Canadian National Railways, one of Canada's largest employers, is a Crown corporation; its assets are owned completely by the people of Canada. The CNR is managed by a board of directors who are quite properly independent of the government and parliament in their day-to-day operations of the company. I am sorry to say that in my opinion the officers of the CNR and the board of directors are rapidly giving the CNR the reputation, deserved, of being a cheap, chiselling company.

There has been specific legislation on the statute books of the province of Saskatchewan in the past few years. This says plainly that employers in the province are required to give employees who have worked for the company for five years, three weeks holiday with pay. The CNR is arguing in the province of Saskatchewan that its hotel employees are not entitled to this three weeks holiday with pay because it is a federal company and it does not, therefore, come under the jurisdiction of the province's labour laws.

• (10:10 p.m.)

In a number of provinces, including, Manitoba, Ontario and Alberta, where the CN has hotels, it has argued,

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

since the federal Parliament enacted the \$1.65 an hour minimum wage for employees coming under federal jurisdiction, that its hotel employees are not entitled to \$1.65 an hour because the hotels are under provincial jurisdiction. I say that any private employer who advanced that kind of specious argument would be laughed out of any court in Canada and would receive the kind of condemnation which cheap, chiselling employers deserve. Yet this is precisely what the CNR is doing.

I raised this question on October 27 and again on November 10 after it had become clear from statements by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) that the department intended to prosecute the CNR for failure to observe the federal minimum wage laws. I asked the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) if he would discuss with the board of Canadian National the desirability of their living up to the laws of Canada. The situation in which the Department of Justice, on behalf of the Department of Labour, prosecutes a Crown corporation is a ridiculous one. The Minister of Transport, whom I like very much, contented himself by saying that he could not comment on the case because the matter was before the courts.

Mr. Speaker, I am not interested in the minister's comments on the case publicly in parliament. What does interest me is that the Minister of Transport should discuss the matter with the officials of the CN. It is true they are independent. It is true we do not watch every single action they take. But it is also true that we are dealing with a Crown corporation whose president and directors are appointed by the government.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): And can be fired by the government.

Mr. Orlikow: And can be fired by the government.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): And should be.

Mr. Orlikow: I suggest to the Minister of Transport that he drop this false modesty and speak to the officials of the CN. I want to say to him and to the president of the CN that if this matter is still outstanding when the estimates of the company come before the Transport Committee, those officials will be spending an awful lot of time in Ottawa rather than in Montreal where they should be, conducting the affairs of the company.

Mr. André Ouellet (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my hon. friend from Quebec East (Mr. Duquet), who is unable to be here tonight, I should like to reply to the hon. member for Calgary North—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Winnipeg North.