

Oral Questions

I want to ask the Prime Minister to confirm that he raised the plight of Lamont and Spencer with Brazilian President Collor during his recent trip to Rio for the earth summit.

Will the Prime Minister indicate to the House and to the families of Christine Lamont and David Spencer the nature of the representations the Prime Minister made and the response of the Brazilian president?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to confirm to my hon. friend that I did indeed raise this very serious case with the President of Brazil in a meeting with him a few days ago in Rio.

I put forward views that I thought would be helpful and appropriate in regard to that situation. He is taking them into consideration and I would expect that we will be advised of the decision of his government.

• (1450)

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I would certainly be interested to know what the views were of the Prime Minister with respect to an appropriate resolution of this.

I would like to ask my supplementary of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. She knows that last week the House of Commons justice committee unanimously agreed to urge the minister to request the expulsion of Lamont and Spencer in accordance with Brazilian law and in accordance with Canada's obligations under international human rights conventions.

My question is straightforward: Will the minister now accept this unanimous all-party recommendation, show leadership on behalf of these young Canadians and seek their expulsion from Brazil and their return to their families in Canada?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the minister has been very troubled by and interested in this case. She called me in Brazil to advise me of the unanimous report that had just been released, I think it was that night, by the committee.

I examined with Brazilian officials the concept that they were sitting around waiting for a request for an expulsion to which they would respond immediately. This is not the case. This is not an accurate assumption and people ought to set it aside.

I did raise with the President the opportunities under Brazil's constitution available to him and to the Government of Canada in considering the plight of these two prisoners, for whom we all feel a great deal of concern and anxiety. After a good discussion with the President, I left with him an invitation to communicate with me as quickly as he could regarding a resolution on it.

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RECREATIONAL FISHERY

Mr. J. W. Bud Bird (Fredericton—York—Sunbury): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

I had the opportunity at the request of the then minister to chair the last national recreational fisheries conference in 1989. Another such conference is being held in September of this year.

I am concerned to hear there are signals emanating from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans which indicate a diminishing priority for recreational fisheries in that department. The most important signal is the apparent termination of the national recreational fisheries survey.

That survey is one of the most important tools we have for managing the recreational fishery in Canada. Among other things, it indicates that sports fishing is a major contributor to our economy to the extent of about \$5 billion directly and it involves six million citizens.

I would like to ask the parliamentary secretary whether the recreational fishery survey has actually been cancelled and if so, why? Does this reflect or reveal a diminishing priority for recreational fisheries in the department?

Mr. Ross Belsher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that the recreational fisheries survey is done every five years. The preliminary results of the 1990 survey were already issued in the fall of 1991. The final results will be issued this fall.

The hon. member is also aware that the conference which takes place every so often will take place again this fall. It will be co-sponsored by the federal and the provincial governments involved.