

Oral Questions

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: —to give 20,500 tonnes of cod a year—

Mr. Speaker: I think we will move on. The Hon. Member for Labrador.

MINISTER QUERIED

Mr. William Rompkey (Labrador): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the silent Minister of Fisheries. I want to ask him, as a willing saboteur to this dirty deal done between Canada and France, and a willing saboteur—

Mr. Speaker: I would say to the Hon. Member for Labrador that, although no immediate complaint has been raised, the Hon. Member is getting awfully close to using unparliamentary language. I would ask him to put his question using perhaps a more favourable word.

Mr. Rompkey: I want to explain to you and the House, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Fisheries is an accomplice in the sell-out of the northern cod on the 40th anniversary of the entry of Newfoundland into Confederation. We brought that stock into Confederation and the Minister was an accomplice in selling it out. I want to ask him, as a Minister of Fisheries who has now told Labrador fishermen that they do not count, that their future is immaterial to him, how can he stay on? How can he be the Minister of Oceans and sell out the Labrador fishermen, sell them down the river?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker—

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rompkey: On a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Labrador was seeking the floor on a point of order, and Hon. Members will realize, of course, that that is not done during Question Period. I will certainly hear him afterwards. The Hon. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Which one?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentlemen are trying to fight the Newfoundland provincial election on the floor of the House, and I have been delegated to answer this kind of snide and ridiculous question.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member.

Mr. Crosbie: I have not finished my answer.

POSITION OF MINISTER OF FISHERIES

Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador): My supplementary question is for the Minister of Fisheries who declined to answer my first question, who refused to answer my first question, is this. He has turned down two fishermen's co-ops on the coast of Labrador, the most disadvantaged fishermen anywhere in Canada. He has said, "No, you cannot fish northern cod". How can he do that and agree to give that very resource away to the French? How can he do that?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for directing the question more specifically. If Hon. Members choose to listen, the Hon. Member knows that we have quotas of northern cod allocated to Canadian fishermen under our enterprise allocation scheme which his Government set up several years ago under which we do not allow new entrants piecemeal because that encroaches upon the quotas available to other Canadian fishermen.

As the Hon. Member for St. John's West has pointed out, the Government of which the Hon. Member for Labrador was a part allocated to France a significant portion of 9,500 tonnes of northern cod. We have reduced that amount substantially to secure a lasting and historic settlement of a festering boundary dispute with France.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

VALDEZ OIL SPILL

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport who is responsible for the Coast Guard which is the lead agency for dealing with marine oil spills. Since the Valdez spill is now half the size of Nova Scotia, has spread over 750 miles of coastline and is now approximately 200 miles from hitting the most northerly part of the B.C. coast, would the Minister explain to the House why he has been unable to travel to view this largest spill in the history of North America?

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I would say to my hon. friend that, as of this morning, the reports we had from the U.S. Coast Guard are to the effect that the oil is still in Prince William Sound. It is just at the opening of the sound, at Cape Clear, 1,000 kilometres from the nearest Canadian border. The oil is moving away from the western part of Alaska toward the ocean and is not moving in the direction of Canada.