

tax return of Petro-Canada, when everybody knows all it was was a bribe?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I think this issue came up once before. In fact, if I recall the last time it came up in the House it related to Canada's international policy.

From what I know as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, first I say to the member that in a number of the allegations he makes he possibly should be somewhat careful as to what he says.

Second, I would point out to him that yes, Petro-Canada does operate in the marketplace as a company within that discipline. I have been concerned in terms of this relationship where, on the one hand, though I am very willing to take my responsibilities as energy minister, and yet Petro-Canada through the privatization is now found in another jurisdiction, the fact of the matter is that with Petro-Canada we have allowed it to operate at arm's length.

I am not pleased when the chairman of Petro-Canada makes those kinds of comments about Hibernia and I have rebuked him publicly. I frankly do not like some of the manner in which Petro-Canada operates.

In terms of the money that the hon. member mentions, I have checked as I promised I would and there was \$6 million that went from Petro-Canada to Myanmar Oil which is owned by the government of that country.

I am not particularly pleased that there are all types of these kinds of arrangements made not only with Petro-Canada and the oil industry internationally but also a number of other industrial organizations as well.

I am not trying to duck the responsibility but if the hon. member wants more information I do think he should ask Petro-Canada specifically as to why and to what policy it is really directing itself when it made those deals.

* * *

ATLANTIC FISHERIES

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister, who will know that foreign overfishing off Canada's east coast is and has been characterized as an international scandal.

Privilege

The fishermen know that who are now without jobs; the plant workers know it; last night on national radio conservationists and environmentalists from all over the world said so. They said the government ought to have acted on it long ago.

I want to ask the Prime Minister, because people down east particularly want to know where he stands on this issue: When is the government finally going to admit that the sweet talk on this one, the diplomacy, is not working? He knows that. Would he now move to take over custodial management of the transboundary fish stocks down there?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I met last week with Premier Wells and I am meeting in a few days with Mr. Cashin with whom I have spoken, so as to co-ordinate all activities, provincial and federal, in regard to how we can deal with this very serious problem.

It is not easy because as my hon. friend knows much of the problem is caused by the fact that foreign overfishing is taking place immediately outside the 200-mile zone. Therefore, while they are technically legal, they are offending the principle because fishing at that spot, across that barrier, continues to undermine the stock and ultimately destroys the resource.

• (1500)

I have had conversations as late as last evening with the Prime Minister of Italy on behalf of his European obligations. I have discussed it with Premier Wells as to the manner in which this can be raised as a very serious environmental issue at the Rio conference.

The minister of fisheries and I have examined a proposal of some seven or eight items that we are considering with the Government of Newfoundland and others. We view it as an extremely serious matter that affects the people of Newfoundland and Labrador in a most unfair way. We are going to act strongly and vigorously and I would be grateful for any ideas or suggestions or help the hon. member might be able to provide the government.

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, there are those who would disagree with him that it is legal even from a technical standpoint. NAFO gave this government, years ago, the option of taking over custodial management, but it is good to hear that