

FISHERIES

ALLEGED VIOLATION OF CANADIAN LAW BY FRENCH
TRAWLERS

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Madam Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I would like to ask the minister what transpired between Canada and France while two French trawlers were hiding out in St. Pierre following orders from Canadian fisheries authorities to report to St. John's, Newfoundland, for alleged violations of our Canadian Fisheries Protection Act. Will the minister table copies of the diplomatic exchange which took place between our two countries?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, on Sunday, March 14, Canadian fisheries officers boarded two French fishing vessels in Canadian waters off the coast of Newfoundland and found that their log books had underreported their catches. The vessels initially refused to comply with orders to report to a Canadian port for inspection. Instead, they went to St. Pierre.

Following representations to the French authorities, the vessels proceeded to Halifax where charges are in the process of being laid. I believe that the charges are for offences under summary conviction and they are for the obstruction of a fisheries protection officer in the execution of his duty under Section 7-D of the Coastal Fisheries Protection Act.

I am not aware of any written exchanges between the governments of Canada and France. I will check to see what kind of exchanges took place, but I suspect that most of the exchanges were between the French fishing boats and the French government.

Mr. Crouse: The French should not be short of codfish for in 1982 they were allocated more than 56 million pounds within our 200 mile zone, with more than 45 million of them coming straight out of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

STATUS OF AREA WITHIN 200 MILE LIMIT

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Madam Speaker, is this fisheries battle a major problem, or is it a side issue to the overriding controversy with France concerning who has jurisdiction over this disputed area within our 200-mile zone? What is the status of any negotiations and discussions concerning this matter, and will he bring the House up to date, since authorities in St. Pierre have asked Paris to send a gunboat to protect French trawlers from Canadian authorities?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, as the hon. member has pointed out, this present problem is related to the controversy between Canada and France over the area which may rightly be claimed by both countries; off Newfoundland in our case, and off St. Pierre-Miquelon in the other. We have had some negotiations with the French government on this point. It is not yet resolved. I do not anticipate an early resolution of this problem.

Oral Questions

THE DISABLED AND THE HANDICAPPED

FUNDING FOR SIGN LANGUAGE SUMMER SCHOOL

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State. He will be aware that the school of translators and interpreters of the University of Ottawa, reacting positively to a major recommendation of the Special Parliamentary Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped and the minister's personal assurance of a quick response to implementing the "Obstacles" report, applied last fall for a small grant of \$80,000 to assist in setting up a summer school for sign interpreters in both languages this summer. Because the summer school program at Ottawa University should have been finalized in January, and in view of the minister's own announced commitment, will he give early approval of this application?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Secretary of State): Madam Speaker, I hope that I will have some news for the hon. member on this particular subject before the week is out.

Mr. Dinsdale: That is good news, and I think it is the result of public pressure, which indicates that the public is really ahead of the government in wanting to initiate programs for the disabled.

"OBSTACLES" REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Madam Speaker, in view of the public emphasis on implementing programs for the disabled as evidenced by the generous response of the general public to the Terry Fox Marathon of Hope, wherein they provided some \$23 million to help find solutions for the disabled, will the minister give top priority to implementing Phase II of the "Obstacles" recommendations as he promised he would do when he assumed his responsibility for the disabled last fall, and thereby catch up to the public demands in these matters?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Secretary of State): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member again for his very real interest in this subject. The hon. member will recall that we tabled in the House the response of various departments of the government to approximately 40 of the recommendations contained in the "Obstacles" report back in December. Within the next 30 days I hope to table a considerable number of further responses from various departments.

The hon. member will be interested to know that we are also following up with a monitoring system on the implementation that has been undertaken in the various responses by the departments, to determine their effectiveness and to determine whether further action in those areas is warranted. May I also say to him through you, Madam Speaker, that we are making every effort to see to it that we achieve, as nearly as possible in this current year, all of the recommendations that are contained in the "Obstacles" report.