

Oral Questions

his predecessor and the disastrous policies of his seatmate, the Minister of Finance.

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the economy is improving and, along with it, jobs. Something like 300,000 jobs have been created in Canada over the last eight months. Young people benefit from that job creation just as much as others who are unemployed. Not only young people benefit, but women entering the work force. As the Hon. Member knows, we have consolidated our programs in an attempt to connect better with young people and to respond more effectively to the services which they need. If the Hon. Member has alternative programs which he would like us to consider, I would be delighted if he would bring them forward so we could examine them and, if they are of value, accept and implement them.

There is not going to be any immediate magic wand solution in responding to this problem. However, we do have proposals to present. I hope we will be able to do that in the context of the Speech from the Throne. I hope that Members opposite will proceed as quickly as possible with the termination of the present matters of debate before the House of Commons so that we can bring those proposals forward.

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FISHERIES**RESTRUCTURING OF NEWFOUNDLAND FISHING INDUSTRY**

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Madam Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. My question is related to the disastrous crisis which exists in Atlantic Canada's fishing industry and the Minister's announced unilateral federal plan to form one large nationalized Newfoundland company, including a large part of the Newfoundland offshore fishery. How can the Government expect that its presence in the fishing industry will strengthen that industry when the provincial Government, labour, and the private companies concerned are solidly opposed to the restructuring plan and are solidly opposed to such heavy-handed government involvement?

● (1450)

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, I would first like to remind my hon. friend that if three or four companies have financial difficulties, I have met with each of them and have asked them why. Believe me, the reasons have nothing to do with Government policies, and they have the honesty to tell me about it. While they are having difficulty, over 700 small companies are in business, are making money, and are managing their business.

As for those three or four companies to which the Hon. Member is referring, may I remind him that the federal Government, and only the federal Government, has put money on the table. The federal Government is the only one. It is not the unions, it is not the companies, it is not the bank, it is not the provincial Government. We are the only ones who have put

\$75 million on the table. We have put our money where our policy is and where our mouth is.

Mr. Crouse: Madam Speaker, I would remind the Hon. Minister that it is not three or four companies of which we are speaking. Those companies represent some 12 companies throughout the length and breadth of Newfoundland.

NORTHUMBERLAND STRAIT HERRING FISHING SEASON

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): There is another area of fisheries problems, namely, the Northumberland Strait herring fisheries about which the Hon. Member for Central Nova has already expressed his concern over the fact that the fishermen have been cut off from harvesting the fish which are there in abundance and which provide them with their livelihood. I would ask the Minister if he would re-think this situation and extend the season this year until a more thorough review of all the factors can be made.

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, I would like to remind Hon. Members about the main fact. The fact is that the biological advice I have received is that that herring stock is in a dismal state, and unless we want to allow the collapse of that stock we should reduce the catch as much as possible. This year I have increased it by 4,000 tonnes. I have extended the period for fishing, and already the catch this year has exceeded the catch of last year. I think it would be irresponsible on my part, since my first responsibility is to the management of the resource, to allow an extension. I met this morning, for instance, with the Minister of Fisheries of New Brunswick and spoke with my counterpart in Nova Scotia, and all of the biological advice indicates that it would be most imprudent to allow over-fishing.

NEWFOUNDLAND REPRESENTATION IN CABINET

Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister, and it is in the context of the economic crisis in Newfoundland. There are 43,000 Newfoundlanders unemployed at the moment; 19 per cent of the labour force unemployed at the best time of the year for employment. Within that context, the fishing industry and the offshore industry are in chaos. The Government, conspiring with the Bank of Nova Scotia, has put the three offshore trawler companies into receivership, disrupting markets in the United States and endangering thousands of jobs.

In the middle of this chaos there is no Cabinet representation from Newfoundland whatsoever. Will the Prime Minister tell the House when he will replace the Hon. Member from White Bay whom he dismissed, and the Hon. Member for Burin-St. George's who was there for the ten days that shook the world and who has, for personal reasons—we do not know what those reasons are—resigned? When will the Prime Minister appoint a new representative who can begin to focus on some of these problems with respect to the federal Govern-