

working together with Canada and other countries to ensure the long-term survival of our fisheries. Why did he not receive any assurances in those terms?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): I just want to inform the Leader of the opposition of the constructive attitude taken by the President of the Government of Spain. The same approach was taken by Vice-Chairman Marin of the European Economic Community last week, all of which will be helpful in initiating a realistic process to protect a resource that is so important to Canada.

I think the hon. member knows perfectly well this is not a problem that can be solved overnight. However, the attitude taken by Mr. Gonzalez will be a very positive contribution to the ultimate settlement of a problem that has gone on far too long in this country.

[English]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister should know there is a crisis in Atlantic Canada and that crisis is in the fishery. Entire towns are being shut down, fishermen and plant workers are losing their jobs and still this government lets foreign fleets continue to deplete our fish stocks.

It is not always clear that these countries realize the extent of the damage their fishermen are causing to our economy.

• (1420)

Will the Prime Minister, at the very least, press for continuing direct discussions with Spain on an ongoing basis to seek an early resolution to the problem of overfishing by foreign fleets? He said this matter has been going on too long. Why does he not do something right now when the President of Spain is visiting our country?

Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, what would the Leader of the Opposition want me to do, arrest him?

Some hon. members: Talk to him.

Mr. Mulroney: He says talk to him. That is exactly what we have been doing. We have been talking directly, bluntly and effectively, as opposed to suggesting, as we heard in this House in the past, that the Canadian

government dispatch instruments of war to clear people out of the gulf.

This fishing has been taking place outside of the 200-mile limit. The Government of Canada is pursuing the question of conservation outside of the 200-mile limit very vigorously. We have made the case very carefully to all members of the European Community, to the commission itself and to the President of Spain that obviously the European Community must accept the NAFO regime. It is the only way that conservation can proceed so there is fish left there for all involved and particularly for Canadian fishermen.

Surely the Leader of the Opposition knows full well that this has to be resolved in precisely the manner that we are resolving it now and not by gunboat diplomacy suggested by a party that really has neither guns nor boats.

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[Translation]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. The private sector and Canadian consumers are very much aware of the problems connected with the GST. My question is as follows: Will the government finally admit that if the GST is introduced as proposed, it will be an administrative nightmare? Is the Minister of Finance now prepared to admit in this House that he is changing the rules for collecting the GST?

[English]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I reject the expression that is used by the hon. member. We have said, though, on a number of occasions that we are looking at various ways of continually simplifying the process, particularly for small business.

We have two means of streamlined accounting in place. We have means by which small business can pay over a less frequent time period than larger businesses. We have put in place ways that small business can reduce the cost of point of sale equipment like cash registers. We have a one-page form for the GST. We have a number of other things we are working on with the provinces to reduce the complexity and the compliance burden of the GST.