

Adjournment Debate

Committee on several occasions, as did the Prime Minister. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister himself met the NAC lobby.

Mr. Speaker, it is easy for the Hon. Member for Halifax to complain about unfair treatment, but the Conservative Government's record is there to prove that if any Government ever did something for the status of women it was certainly the Conservative Government. She knows perfectly well that her Party, which was in power for a quarter of a century, did nothing. It was a Party that did nothing about the status of women.

Mr. Speaker, I will not bore you with a litany of all the matters we dealt with ever since we came to power. However, I may remind the Hon. Member, who is so close to the NAC, that on July 13, 1988, as a Member of this House, I wrote a letter to the president of the NAC, who has yet to answer my letter. Mr. Speaker, I should be delighted to send the Hon. Member a copy of this letter which I think is a very good letter—and not just because I wrote it—and deserves a reply. Mr. Speaker, I have yet to receive a reply. I wish the Hon. Member, who has privileged access to the president of the NAC, would ask her why she did not bother to answer my letter.

I would also like to say that the Hon. Member knows very well that NAC is not the only one to speak for Canadian women. It is a very important group. The Government has considered the recommendations—many recommendations made by this action group. But the Government listens to that group as it does to other groups and makes its decision based on all the factors involved.

I would also like to say that we are human and obviously, NAC chose a sort of confrontation. That is their right, it is normal to criticize the Government, we understand that very well, except it is not easy to be booed at a meeting and in my opinion, the constructive approach, as she will see in my letter, is much more positive.

So, Mr. Speaker, once again, I would like to conclude by saying that the Conservative Government has acted. If the Hon. Member wishes to know all the women's issues we have settled, I will be pleased to send her a copy.

• (1805)

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—DRIFT-NET FISHING—AGREEMENT WITH JAPANESE/OBSERVERS ON FISHING VESSELS

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, my question concerns the drift-net fishery and the fact that the Canadian Government was not taking a strong enough stand in imposing an extension of the boundary north, among other things.

I was appointed as our Party's critic for fisheries in the middle of January, just four and one half months ago. Until then I had really heard nothing about the drift-net fishery and doubt that I had even heard the term.

From what I have heard, read and seen about it during the intervening period, I believe that if I do nothing less than bring this terrible situation taking place in the Pacific Ocean to the attention of Canadians, particularly on the West Coast, it will have been worth my while being here.

According to my latest information, there are some 50,000 miles of these invisible nets which reportedly cover an area of just less than three million square miles. These nets are operating in an area roughly 400 miles north and south and 7,000 miles east-west. There are enough drift-nets to cover that area seven times over. They can be suspended at any depth to catch anything and everything that comes into contact with them.

I have a letter dated May 16, 1989, from a constituent who states:

I have been a commercial fisherman for 15 years and believe the high seas drift-net fishery presently expanding in the Pacific is the beginning of the end to our salmon stocks.

This is a fisherman who has been watching it happen:

In my travels I have found seven monofilament drift-nets on beaches from Cape Cook to Masset on the north end of the Queen Charlotte Islands, one-mile net adrift off San Joseph Bay, one net tangled in a friend's propeller 70 miles northwest of Bull Harbour, and thousands of corks from these nets on beaches and adrift. I might add that I get very few chances to go ashore in my profession.

Yet he is seeing all this evidence of the expansion of this type of fishery. He goes on to state: "Please do everything in your power to stop the interception of our salmon stocks by foreign fleets". That is a very narrow