

*Oral Questions*

Mr. Speaker, I have made it quite clear that I do not believe in wage and price controls. I do not think that they work.

That was the minister's answer yesterday. Can the minister explain why, on August 4, 1982, he voted for the Liberal regime of wage and price controls? Where is the consistency in the words and actions of the Minister of Finance?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the position that I took in that particular vote may have related to a range of issues that were being discussed at that time.

Before I comment on what I might or might not have done in a particular vote, if the hon. member had had the courtesy to send me a notice of the question so I could refer to it, he might get a better answer.

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the Minister of Finance does not remember what he said on a bill which kept us sitting through June, July and until August 4, 1982. The legislation was the Public Service restraint act. He voted with the—

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** Another deliberate contempt of the rules by the NDP.

**Mr. Murphy:**—government almost each and every time he had a chance. He should remember what his policy was.

My supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Finance. What is the difference between a Liberal finance minister and a Conservative finance minister?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the opportunity the hon. member has given me to draw these conclusions.

Let me reflect back to 1979-80, when the Liberal finance critic at the time, who happens to be the Leader of the Opposition, was asked whether he supported the high interest rate policy at the time, and whether he would resign if that interest rate policy was not changed. He said, not once but twice, that he would resign. He said it twice. I was sitting right beside him. He said right beside me, that he would resign.

**Mr. Speaker:** Despite the minister's enjoyment of being given a great opportunity to consider the question extensively, I think we will have to move on.

**FISHERIES**

**Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, I would like to put a question to the right hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs.

He will probably know that the Newfoundland premier, yesterday, indicated that his colleague, the new fisheries minister here, had scuttled negotiations between the Newfoundland and federal governments on the subject of a fisheries aid package.

How can the federal government here possibly come up with a satisfactory package if it refuses to consult with the Newfoundland government whose fishermen and whose plant workers are being mauled and pummelled the most by the current fisheries disaster? Is this part of this government's continuing isolation of Newfoundland over the constitutional issue? Are there fish in Meech Lake after all?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, there are two separate questions here.

If the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is isolated, that is an action quite clearly of their choice after a debate that they rammed through the House of Assembly of Newfoundland.

With regard to the question of an assistance program to help the fishery in Atlantic Canada, and particularly the northern cod fishery which is in serious crisis, the hon. member knows there have been extensive negotiations. I have been part of them myself. They have been going on for some time.

There has been some area of disagreement in that, at least in some of the discussions in which I have been involved, the government of Newfoundland which has contributed to the problem does not appear very willing to contribute cash to the solution of the problem. Naturally, as we are bringing forward a policy which my colleague hopes to announce in a few days, we hope that there will be an acceptance of responsibility for its share of solving this problem on the part of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.