

Oral Questions

I will look into this matter along with my colleagues. While I cannot give any guarantees, obviously, I can assure my hon. friend that we will see what we can do.

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FISHERIES**HIGHLAND FISHERIES PLANT IN GLACE BAY, N.S.—REQUEST FOR ENTERPRISE ALLOCATION**

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. Over 300 employees of Highland Fisheries in Glace Bay have been informed by their owners, Clearwater Fine Foods of Halifax, that their plant is closed and will be closed because the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans will not give that plant or its trawlers an enterprise allocation.

Will the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans indicate to those employees and to the people of Glace Bay specifically when he received a written request from Highland Fisheries and why he is refusing to grant this enterprise allocation when, in fact, he knows the unemployment situation in Glace Bay is chronic and getting worse as a result of this particular action?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member raises a problem of extreme concern to the fishermen and their families of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. It is a problem of which I have been aware for several weeks. This is not an uncommon problem in some of the communities where there are smaller fish plants which did not receive large enterprise allocations under the enterprise allocation scheme introduced by the former Liberal Government in 1984.

The Hon. Member well knows that Clearwater Fine Foods does have enterprise allocations. In fact, it has uncaught enterprise allocations for the present year. These are dispersed according to a process in which all of the companies and the Atlantic Council of Fisheries Ministers engage each autumn. I cannot violate that process by making a special exceptional allocation to this plant when there are still fish in the water that could be caught. We gave Clearwater additional enterprise allocations in the northern waters this year for vessels between 65 and 100 feet.

The problem arises for other reasons relating to market prices and not to a shortage of fish available to Clearwater Fine Foods.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): That answer, Mr. Speaker, is in direct contradiction to what senior company officials are saying to the employees.

The Minister will know that the chronic unemployment situation in Glace Bay is there now. People need the assistance of the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The Cape

Breton Advisory Committee has recommended an enterprise allocation for that company, the provincial Minister of Fisheries has agreed with that particular request. Based upon fairness, equity, and because of the chronic unemployment, on behalf of the employees and on behalf of the community, will the Minister not now reconsider his position of some time ago and give an enterprise allocation to that plant and to the trawlers at Highland Fisheries, thereby enabling those workers to have some dignity for themselves and their families?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member may not like my answer. I said that we had exercised equity and fairness. We have been bound by an enterprise allocation scheme which his Government created in 1983-84. Under that enterprise allocation scheme, which I have supplemented in the past year, there are still fish waiting to be caught by Clearwater Fine Foods which could be delivered to the Glace Bay plant rather than to the other plants to which it is delivering.

The problem results because of a softening price and demand for fish in the market at the present time, and because Clearwater is not willing to continue to employ these workers, notwithstanding the fact that there are fish available to Clearwater's plant if Clearwater chose to go out and catch them.

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CANADIAN ARMED FORCES**CFB PETAWAWA—FORMER TROOPER'S ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT**

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

I met on the weekend with a former trooper, Don Laird, of the Royal Canadian Dragoons based in Petawawa, Ontario. He made a series of very serious allegations of misconduct at that base, which included doctors' orders being ignored or disobeyed by field commanders, harassment of injured or ill troopers, acts of brutality encouraged or ignored by NCOs and junior officers, drunkenness while on duty and while operating unsafe vehicles, as well as drunkenness and fighting going on in the barracks, vomiting in hallways, rooms, and in washing machines. Has the Minister caused an investigation to be launched and, if so, what facts have so far come to light?

Hon. Paul Dick (Associate Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. This matter has come to my attention since the newspaper reports and we are very concerned about it. They are serious allegations.

I have asked my officials for a complete report. Further to that, I have ordered that a board of inquiry be established to investigate the facts, to do an adjudication and to render a decision.