

FISHERIES

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Forty-three years ago today the people of Newfoundland and Labrador of their own free will became Canadians. They became citizens of what remains, despite the difficulties and disappointments of the day, still the most privileged nation on the face of the earth.

By that act of union, Newfoundlanders brought to Canada a clear and compelling case for what is now recognized as the 200-mile economic zone.

My question to the Prime Minister is the following. In light of the efforts by Newfoundland fishermen today to make Canada's case off the the 200-mile limit, how long must the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, indeed how long must all Canadians wait for this government to move to unilaterally extend custodial jurisdiction of the nose and tail of the Grand Banks and to stop the international slaughter of north Atlantic cod stocks?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member well knows, the government has been going all out in its efforts to try and ensure that this resource is saved, not only for Canadian fishermen who are most important to us, but also to present to the Europeans that the destruction of the fishery is not in their interests either.

The best way to do this is through a multilateral effort and co-operation through working in Europe, through NAFO, through UNCED where we will be making a major presentation in June and the Prime Minister will be attending personally to help highlight this issue; through building support internationally for our view of the jurisdiction on the high seas and the preservation of this resource.

I was encouraged last week by my meetings with the Germans who are going to help us in dealing with some of the other Europeans.

• (1440)

As I have said before in this House, this is the way that is going to resolve it on behalf of the fishermen of Newfoundland and the fishing industry. We will leave no stone unturned until we get this done.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): On a supplementary, Mr. Speaker, the member for St. John's West, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, did a fly-past today over the nose and tail of the Grand Banks.

Oral Questions

I want to tell the Prime Minister that the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, indeed the people of Canada, do not want a fly-past by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. They want him to pitch down and to declare on behalf of all Canadians our custodial jurisdiction over the nose and tail of the Grand Banks.

I want to ask the Prime Minister: Why is the Government of Canada encouraging, because that is what is happening, Canadian fishermen to symbolically declare ownership of the nose and tail of the Grand Banks when this government is not prepared legally to declare our custodial jurisdiction over that same area and to halt now, not next year or in future years, the slaughter of those important cod stocks, an important contributor to the food basket of the world?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the hon. member that this is indeed part of the food basket of the world. That is why we need multilateral action in order to preserve it.

The actions that the government has been taking are not only appropriate but they are effective. The fact that the Newfoundland fishermen have decided as well to create their own symbols is exactly another tactic that is useful as long as it is done within the jurisdictional ambit which they are honouring as they do their sail out to the 200-mile limit today.

I cannot think of any better way than to have the government work at the diplomatic, political and official levels and have the fishermen demonstrate their own interests and the industry demonstrate its interest in this. That is a co-ordinated Canadian effort and at the end of the day that is what is going to resolve this issue.

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[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs and has to do with the Canadian hostage being held in Lebanon. On five occasions in the last six months, the minister has refused to admit that Henriette Haddad had been kidnapped in Lebanon. All other governments do their best to free their hostages. The Canadian government is the only one that refuses to acknowledge that one of its citizens has been kidnapped, and it refuses to