

Oral Questions

Mr. Mulroney: What we did then on behalf of the prairie farmer was criticized by members of the Liberal party. What we are doing and will do for the Atlantic fishermen will be criticized by them because they have not got a constructive bone in their bodies. They are nothing but negative destroyers of ideas and dreams.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

This government has known since July that there was a problem in the fishery. He has talked, he says, with President Bush on lobsters. He has talked to the European Community on groundfish, he says, and nothing has been done. Nothing. Instead of relating to the fishermen and the communities he has preferred to play up to the big companies.

This government should learn more about groundfish and lobster and identify less with sharks and bloodsuckers.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. MacLellan: They are all bigshots now with all the answers. Where are they?

Mr. Crosbie: What about Micronav?

Mr. MacLellan: One job and that's it.

The people in this country want support from their government. They are not getting it. When will this government help the fishermen and the fishing communities when this country and they need them most of all?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the government has been working on these problems and with some success since last July.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Marchi: What is your definition of failure then?

Mr. Crosbie: We can see the true interest in the problem by the fact that anyone who tries to answer a question is interrupted by guffaws and shouting from across the House.

With respect to Atlantic Canada, in the member's own constituency we saw to it that preference was given to Micronav, a company in the high-tech area of that city, to create employment in his area. The member knew who to contact then. He was not up playing in the House

and making insulting statements when Micronav got the assistance it needed in his own district.

With respect to what we are doing, we announced on Monday what we are doing with respect to the immediate emergency. We are developing new programs, a community diversification fund. We are applying our program—the program for older workers—to those who are 55 and older who might not be able to get re-employment. We said that we are going to supplement that program for workers who are between the ages of 50 and 54 because these companies have not provided pension plans for their employees.

We are demonstrating concern. We are helping them. We are going to continue helping them. We are not just making cheap shots here in the House of Commons for supposed political advantage.

Mr. Tobin: You are an embarrassment to your province.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Cape Breton—The Sydneys.

Mr. MacLellan: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Crosbie: He knows all about poverty with his \$1.9 million mortgage.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. members: Cheap, cheap!

Mr. Tobin: Coming from a Crosbie, that takes a lot of nerve.

Mr. Crosbie: The cheapest little demagogue in the country!

Mr. Marchi: Talk about your brother.

Some hon. members: Order!

Mr. Speaker: I wonder if it would help if all members on both sides considered that this is an extremely important subject and that there are a lot of our fellow citizens in the Maritimes who are hoping that something constructive will come out of the exchange today.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacLellan: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. He quotes Professor Davis. If he reads that article further he will see that Professor Davis recommends tying the quotas to the communities. Yet his own Minister of Fisheries said