

Oral Questions

of Labrador understand that the minister of fisheries cannot create the fish and that this is a problem that has arisen over a long period of years.

It is not a problem that is going to be resolved quickly. It may be several years before it is resolved or there could be a good fishery this year. We will have to wait and see.

In the meantime, the fishermen of Labrador are receiving assistance from the government to maintain them while this environmental circumstance or whatever the circumstances are that are causing this are overcome. We will continue to support them. That is all any government can do. I cannot put fish in the sea.

We have followed the scientific advice of CAFSAC all of these years. This circumstance has arisen despite the fact that Canada has always been very cautious in the TACs that Canada has set.

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HEALTH CARE

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

The Liberal premier of New Brunswick has now joined the Liberal premiers of Quebec and Newfoundland in seeking user fees for medicare which are strenuously opposed by the New Democratic Party.

In the words of Glen Clark, the B.C. Minister of Finance, "all four NDP administrations will be leading the attack on the federal government if Ottawa tries to water down the Canada Health Act to allow provinces to impose user fees".

Will the minister tell the Liberal premiers categorically that user fees will not be accepted in any disguise?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I am trying to find the relationship between New Brunswick and British Columbia. Mr. Clark, Mr. McKenna and myself are having a little trouble because there is no relationship.

I already said to my friend and to all members of the House that I think it is legitimate for the premiers to look at the cost of the health care system.

My predecessors and myself have always said that we believe that we do not have to change the rules or the principles. It is not our intention to do so. I do not understand why my friend is getting nervous.

• (1440)

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

The minister also knows that the cut to federal medicare contributions which will amount to \$4 billion next year are prompting these threats to our national medicare system. Since the cuts are substantially eroding provincial health services, will the minister live up to the Canada Health Act guarantees and restore funding in the upcoming budget?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised the member does not know that all the provinces including those with NDP governments have already said that there was enough money in the system. This includes the member's NDP government in British Columbia.

In other words, 9 per cent of GNP in the country is enough to manage the health care system. At the same time, following the direction given by the Minister of Finance, we have to control the finances of the country. I believe what has been done was well done and moreover we do not believe, including his own friends, we have to put more money. We already do.

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[*Translation*]

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, my question was intended for the Prime Minister, but I will direct it to the minister responsible for agriculture in Quebec. Last Wednesday this House unanimously adopted a motion asking for the Prime Minister's personal involvement in the GATT talks, with President George Bush and the President of the European Community, Mr. Jacques Delors. Could the minister let us know whether tomorrow the Prime Minister will be able to give us a detailed report on his meetings with these very influential figures on protecting and safeguarding GATT article XI?