

8,600 tonnes, with a footnote which states: "For bilateral commitments"?"

What bilateral commitments does the minister have in mind? The chief bilateral commitment is to the people of Canada. Why is this minister giving favouritism toward the foreigners?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member can engage in his fishy business on and on as he always does. But, as I will show in a moment, it is the Liberal party that is very much floundering around on this issue. This government has Canadianized the Canadian fishery and reduced foreign quotas within our waters to very low levels compared to what they were under the Liberal government.

In fact, we have ended some 25,000 tonnes of fishing effort on our primary codstocks by the European Community and France as a result of conscious decisions taken by this government.

It is passing strange that the hon. member's colleague from Halifax would urge me strenuously this week to allow an American fishing vessel to be allowed to fish in replacement of a Canadian vessel on codstocks off Newfoundland. Yet this member has the hypocrisy to condemn this government when he should be looking at himself and his colleagues in the face in the mirror.

* * *

THE JUDICIARY

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, my question concerns the resignation which was the honourable course of the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport in light of the many precedents which were established by Messrs. Chrétien, Lalonde, Drury and Munro in this House.

I want to ask the Prime Minister if he will clarify whether or not it is the policy of this government, and particularly of this Prime Minister, that it is essential to establish firm, unequivocal standards relative to the absolute independence of the judiciary of Canada and absolute restraint from any kind of involvement or intervention by ministers of the Crown with any court anywhere in the country.

Oral Questions

Those were the words of the now Secretary of State for External Affairs which resulted in the clear statement by the then Prime Minister Trudeau with respect to policy in this area.

Is the policy statement by Prime Minister Trudeau of March 12, 1976, with respect to this matter still in effect for his government?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): I have difficulty understanding the question because my hon. friend refers to precedent. The fact is that Mr. Chrétien, in 1971, communicated with a judge and did not resign. Mr. Drury, in 1976, communicated with a judge and did not resign. Mr. Kaplan, then Solicitor General, in 1982, wrote to a judge and did not resign.

We have guidelines that indicate that no minister may communicate with members of the judiciary concerning any matter which they have before them in their judicial capacity, except the Minister of Justice.

The fact is that the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport communicated with a judge, even though he sought neither gain nor favour nor personal advantage of any kind, having been asked to make the intervention on behalf of the Canadian sporting fraternity as international games were opening up in New Zealand and a difficult matter had to be resolved. Even with those extenuating circumstances he did communicate with a judge. I believe that was a violation of the guidelines, as a result of which I accepted his resignation.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister indicated that the minister was asked for his intervention by the Canadian sporting fraternity, specifically, presumably, by the Canadian Track and Field Association. The minister made a similar statement.

However, in view of the fact that I spoke this morning with the lawyer for the Canadian Track and Field Association who stated categorically that neither she nor her partner had made any request whatsoever for intervention by the minister, I want to ask the Prime Minister whether he would reconsider that statement and in fact agree that no such request was made whatsoever.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the minister has resigned. Yet the NDP, this not being good enough, continue to harass and ask me for