

S. O. 31

tives should actively conduct that study with the assistance of veterans organizations including representatives of merchant navy veterans.

I hope the minister will tell this House and the people of Canada if he has completely rejected the possibility of giving war veterans status to merchant seamen. If he has not, he should at long last do the right thing and bring in legislation. We will put it through in one day and correct this historic injustice.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, last month it was the men and women of Air Canada who fell victim to the government's irresponsible economic policies; 2,800 jobs were lost across Canada, 240 in Manitoba. Two weeks ago the government's misguidance in other policies led to cuts to the CBC eliminating an estimated 40 to 50 jobs in Manitoba alone. This week it is the Royal Canadian Mint in Winnipeg; 29 more employees have been laid off with little hope, if any, of return.

When will this government learn to stop this brutal slashing of good jobs for Canadians and stop picking on western Canadians. Is there a minister in the government prepared to tell us today of the other job cuts Canadians can expect this winter as a result of policies such as high interest rates, the Canadian U.S. trade agreement, and the inflationary goods and services tax?

What a disgrace. Almost 5 million Canadians are poor, close to 2 million are on welfare, and over half a million are using overcrowded food banks. When will this assault on the working Canadian men and women cease?

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FISHERIES

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, the 1991 Atlantic groundfish management plan clearly demonstrates that recent government measures including quota cuts have worked for the benefit of all Canadians, particularly those in the fishing industry. Increases in 4X and 5 cod quotas clearly indicate that we have turned the corner in the Scotia Fundy region.

I commend the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans for his sensitive and sensible TAC for the vital 2J and 3K-L cod stock. The established figure finds a reasonable balance between allowing the stock an opportunity to recover while at the same time securing the social and economic needs of those fishermen and plant workers whose livelihood depends on the stock.

Suggestions from Cabot Martin of the Newfoundland Inshore Fisheries Alliance should be seen as a self-serving hypocrisy that they are. During the past week he has been the darling of the media calling for major cuts in the quota but of course intends that all the cuts should be from the offshore sector.

• (1410)

Today's announcement from the European Community for an excessive unilateral EC quota of northern cod should be condemned from all sides of this House and by all Canadians. Through the sound management of this government and this minister, our cod stocks will come back and secure a great future for the Atlantic ground fishery. However, 1991 may require new measures for dealing with our European friends.

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[Translation]

POVERTY

Mr. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, as Christmas approaches, I would like to draw the attention of this House to the shameful fact that poverty and malnutrition are affecting increasingly larger numbers of Canadians. One family out of five spends more than 50 per cent of its income on shelter. Sixty per cent of single-parent families, mostly headed by women, live below the poverty line.

In Montreal's disadvantaged neighbourhoods, 12 per cent of the children are born underweight, which is more than in many Third World countries. Fortunately, community organizations and volunteers are helping to deal with this problem.

I would like to pay tribute to these people today and ask hon. members to increase pressure on the government and do their share to provide a minimum of dignity for our poorest fellow Canadians.