

member for Egmont. We have not seen them yet rise in this House to defend the interests of fishermen, more particularly inshore fishermen, and criticize the department's policy with respect to large trawlers having access to the gulf.

I want to say to Quebec fishermen that if there are budget cuts, they apply not only to the province of Quebec but to all other maritime provinces. We rise on their behalf and I trust other members on the government side can do the same and speak loudly so fishermen can get justice from this new government. I now want to deal with the presence of large trawlers in the gulf. First of all, Mr. Chairman, let me say at the outset that the action taken by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans since he became a member of this government have done precious little to restore balance in the struggle for national unity. Since 1970, the previous government had made efforts to replenish the fish stocks in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and generally in eastern Canada, and we proved it when the 200-mile fishing zone was established. Moreover, when in 1976 the hon. member for Westmorland-Kent realized that the situation had become tragic and that all that was left was only small 15- to 18-inch cod in the gulf, he denied large trawlers access to the gulf.

Three years later, Mr. Chairman, the fishermen can now catch 25-, 30- and even 40-inch cod, something which had not happened for at least 15 years. To that end the federal government had to lower quotas in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and even reduce the fishing season for a few years. We have implemented 2 and 3 cents a pound programs to be able to subsidize fishermen, to help fish processors and processing plants, and even to subsidize large trawlers and help equip them to operate in the 200-mile fishing zone.

These programs cost \$117 million to the Canadian taxpayers in four years. But they have been useful. We have increased the cod stocks in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, but the new minister has now opened up the Gulf and let in the big financial sharks, the large fish processing companies of Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia.

The statement made by the hon. minister on August 27 took everyone by surprise. No matter that the hon. minister said in the House that there was consultation, I suggest that this statement took everyone by surprise. It may not have surprised either National Products or Nickerson or even the hon. member for South Shore, but it did surprise the rest of Canadians. The minister has stated in the House that the provinces were consulted through the groundfish advisory committee at a meeting held in St. John's on July 11. The minister, his officials and certain Progressive Conservative members of southern Nova Scotia seem to be interpreting rather strangely the minutes of the meeting of the advisory committee from which the hon. minister quoted in this committee last night, and they have also accused an official of the New Brunswick government of not having informed his minister that there were consultations during this meeting. The New

### Supply

Brunswick government official will probably have the opportunity to read *Hansard* for last night and today and to reply to the minister.

I was rather disappointed last night when the minister accused an official of not having done his job. I then thought that if he was now accusing a New Brunswick government official of not having done his job, he might do the same tomorrow for the Quebec government or that of Prince Edward Island. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I contacted this morning the Quebec government in relation to the interpretation of the minutes of the meeting held on July 11 in St. John's.

I would like to give a summary of the facts for those who are not aware of the situation as I see that many students are in the gallery today. On August 27, the minister stated that there was a 10,000 metric ton surplus available to fishermen in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and he announced at the same time that 6,000 tons should be allocated to trawlers of 100 feet or more. This last part of the press release is what surprised everyone.

The minister stuck up for himself, as shown on page 2 of the minutes of the meeting, and I quote:

The members are, on the whole, in favour of increasing the present TAC; however, the possibility of higher TAC and quotas for vessels over and under 100 feet is giving rise to contradictory views.

Mr. Chairman, if that is called consultations with Quebec, I wonder what is meant by consultation. At 12.45 today, answering the question of an hon. member for the NDP on the price of salt fish, the minister said there should be consultations with the provinces and even consensus before making certain changes. I agree with him. That is the policy that should be implemented. But it was not when time came to allow 100-foot trawlers or more into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Now, here is the message I received from the representative of the Quebec government, Mr. Bourque, who was at the committee meeting. I quote:

We discussed the 4T increase from 36,000 to 46,000 tons.

A representative of the Quebec fishing industry, Mr. Richard Lapointe, suggested it. A consensus was reached with regard to increasing the quotas from 36,000 to 46,000 tons but not on their allotment, and the report states that. Later on, there was no consultation concerning their allotment. This is why the government of Quebec made representations on September 5, 1979 to the hon. James McGrath in a telegram which reads as follows:

FROM: Rodrigue Tremblay, Minister of Industry and Commerce

TO: James McGrath, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

DATE: September 5, 1979.

We are pleased about the increase in cod quotas in 4T and 4Vn to 10,000 metric tons which was announced in your release of August 27, 1979.

On the other hand, we are opposed to the allocation of part of those 10,000 metric tons to vessels of 100 feet or more that are based outside the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

This float of vessels of 100 feet or more based outside the gulf has benefited from a very generous increase in cod quotas in 4VSW and has made good catches in 2J3KL since the beginning of 1979.