

Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—
PROJECT CRITERIA

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary to the minister. Do the criteria adopted by the department take into account the provinces as opposed to regions, and do they take into account such factors as the rate of unemployment per province and the population per province, because the projects so far approved for my own province, which has the highest rate of unemployment in the country and the fewest opportunities for jobs, would indicate that this is not so?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the minister might be allowed to reply briefly, but again I bring to the attention of hon. members the fact that we will be running short of time and we have considered only two or three subjects so far.

[Translation]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Secretary of State): To all the questions asked by the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes. However, when he states that unemployment among the young is higher in his province than in any other, he is mistaken.

[Later:]

[English]

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I am sure the Secretary of State did not mean to indicate I was trying to slander my province by my question. The translation indicated that the Secretary of State did not understand my question. I did not indicate in my question, nor did I mean to, that there was the highest rate of unemployment among young people in Newfoundland. What I said was that my province had the highest rate of unemployment—period.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

POTATOES—PROPOSALS BY PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND AND
NEW BRUNSWICK FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE—RE-
SOLVING OF DIFFICULTIES

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Have the difficulties he referred to in his reply to the hon. member for Egmont last Thursday in respect of the proposals made by the Ministers of Agriculture of Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick regarding assistance to the potato industry in those provinces yet been resolved?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): No, they have not, Mr. Speaker. One of the difficulties, which I did not spell out at that time, is that they are not asking for a deficiency payment but rather for assistance with regard to seed potatoes for this season. I am sure the hon. member will realize this is not one of the practices under the aegis of the Agricultural Stabilization Act. The other problem in regard to the 1970 crop is that returns to producers for the two areas have been running between

[Mr. Pelletier.]

95 per cent and 100 per cent of the long-term average. This also has to be considered.

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

INQUIRY AS TO DEBATE ON ABORTION

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have a completely non-controversial question I should like to direct to the government House leader. In view of the fact we are now into the month of May and the Speech from the Throne last October promised a debate on abortion, is the minister in a position now to say when we are going to have this debate?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): No, Mr. Speaker, I am not in a position to do so. I can assure the hon. member that it will take place before the end of this session.

* * *

FISHERIES

SWORDFISH—ASSISTANCE TO FISHERMEN BECAUSE OF
CONTAMINATION

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry. In view of the economic hardships faced by swordfishermen in Atlantic Canada caused by the mercury content in swordfish, has the minister established a policy to assist these fishermen and, if so, when can we expect the details of this policy to be announced?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): Mr. Speaker, the task force working on the swordfish problem has reported to both the Nova Scotia and federal governments in this connection. Negotiations are being pursued by our two governments to resolve this difficult problem.

SURVEILLANCE OF FOREIGN FISHING FLEETS IN
CANADIAN WATERS

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): In view of the criticism levelled by the Fisheries Council of Canada that surveillance of foreign fishing fleets in Canadian waters was not being adequately maintained, has the minister worked out a formula with his colleague the Minister of National Defence on this matter, and how will information on the activities of foreign fleets be conveyed and provided to the Canadian fishing industry?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): Mr. Speaker, there is close co-operation between the Department of Fisheries and Forestry and the Department of National Defence in this connection. I might add that surveillance by the Department of Fisheries and Forestry has continued and with our new closing lines the difficulties of policing Canada's exclusive fishing zones is much reduced.