

Oral Questions

modate these people within the public service. Perhaps I might also remind the hon. gentleman that on several occasions members of the opposition urged us to abolish Information Canada.

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[English]

FISHERIES**SEALS—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF REPORT ON DECLINE IN POPULATION AND NEED FOR DECREASING QUOTAS**

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask whether the Minister of State for Fisheries will table the report he has received concerning the serious decline in the seal population and the necessity of decreasing quotas for the seal hunt?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of State (Fisheries)): Mr. Speaker, it would help if I knew to which report the hon. member was alluding. If it is the first one which was given to me in early fall, and which was more pessimistic than the data indicated eventually, I can certainly undertake to make it available to the hon. member. The second meeting on the issue was a meeting that I attended, but I do not think there was a written report, but rather a verbal communication. I will certainly look into this because I want information to be available.

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, has the minister any studies with regard to alternative employment for persons who would be affected by a stoppage of the seal hunt and, if so, would he make those available at the same time?

Mr. LeBlanc (Westmorland-Kent): Mr. Speaker, I am afraid this is a non-starter, because even if alternative employment could be found the competition for the fish between seals and fishermen needing that fish, particularly herring, caplin and cod, would make it necessary for us to cull the herd.

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COMMUNICATIONS**CABLEVISION—PROPOSED REVIEW OF DECISION NOT TO ALLOW ACCEPTANCE FOR ADVERTISING**

Mr. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might ask the Minister of Communications whether she has had an opportunity to review the decision of the CRTC not to allow small community cable TV systems to accept advertising to offset the programming costs, and I ask this in light of the fact that the CRTC decision not to allow these small stations to continue accepting advertising will result in a deterioration of the amount of community programming available on these cable systems?

[Translation]

Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, the CRTC regulation demanding that cable TV companies broadcast a certain amount of locally produced material can be justified by the money they make through cable operation. As for reviewing the policy to prevent the

[Mr. Chrétien.]

companies from obtaining advertising revenues, I have not yet had the opportunity to do so. The hon. member should keep in mind that this policy concerning the limitation of potential revenues is derived from the fact that it is important not to separate the viewers on the one hand from the revenues related to the viewers on the other.

[English]

Mr. Beatty: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her answer. I am wondering if she intends to pursue this with the CRTC to get further information, and would she ask that the CRTC make public all studies it has done as to the effects of allowing cable television to accept advertising on the viability of other television and other media outlets in the affected area?

[Translation]

Mrs. Sauvé: Mr. Speaker, I think I have answered the hon. member's question regarding the rationale for this policy. The important point is not to split the source of income. However, as the hon. member suggests, I can discuss this matter with the CRTC chairman and ask him whether he can release the studies underlying his decision.

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[English]

FISHERIES**LEVEL OF COMPENSATION TO ATLANTIC COAST FISHERMEN FOR STORM DAMAGE**

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, in view of the loss suffered by the fishing industry as a result of last month's storms in items of equipment, boats, private wharves, buildings and processing facilities, will the Minister of State (Fisheries) advise the House what percentage of the replacement cost injured fishermen can expect under the present plans of reimbursement of loss?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of State (Fisheries)): Mr. Speaker, I would have to check into this. I think there are different levels of compensation according to the type of equipment involved. I will look into it and try to answer the hon. member's question.

Mr. McCain: Mr. Speaker, in view of the rather poor income year which fishermen experienced last year, would the minister explore the possibility of a change in the regulations which would improve this reimbursement formula so it would approach replacement costs, in view of the fact that fishermen do not have enough money to return to business in many instances?

Mr. LeBlanc (Westmorland-Kent): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is very familiar, I am sure, having served in provincial government circles, with all these agreements between the provinces and the federal government regarding the disaster formula. To bring about a change is extremely difficult. I would say to the hon. member that the problem of the income of the fishermen in the last year, especially in the area of the Bay of Fundy, is one with which I am very much concerned at the moment, but I believe we must not mix the two situations.