

*Oral Questions*

Consumers Association of Canada, or in his new capacity as the head of the consumer information office.

I do not understand where the hon. member is coming from when he should be rejoicing, as the consumers are, that the government had the will, the right and the decency to appoint somebody with such an interest in consumers as Mr. Nickolas Murray.

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### BRITISH COLUMBIA FLOODING—EMERGENCY RELIEF

**Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the minister responsible for Emergency Preparedness.

The interior of British Columbia, including areas from Prince George to Oliver, has received extensive flood damage as a result of sustained heavy rains. Nine people are now confirmed or believed dead from flood waters and mud slides. Helicopter evacuation of stranded residents has been initiated and flash flood alerts have been issued.

The Okanagan Lake system is now 20 centimetres above full pool and is expected to rise another 16 to possibly 30 centimetres, depending on the weather.

My question to the minister is whether the minister has responded to a B.C. government request for emergency relief that was issued today under the federal government's Disaster Assistance Program?

Second, will the minister agree to provide immediate assistance on this very urgent matter?

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I think the House sympathizes with the people of British Columbia who are experiencing a disastrous situation at the present time. The minister responsible for disaster assistance is the Minister of National Defence. He has received a request for financial assistance from British Columbia, and I can confirm today that he will provide the financial assistance requested—in line with a policy that was developed a few years ago—in order to help British Columbia cope with these disastrous conditions.

*[English]*

**Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the answer to the question.

I would like to add that the mountain snow packs in the interior of British Columbia are presently exceeding normal levels. In fact, we are now returning to the possibility of warm seasonal weather which has set the stage for even further wide-spread damage.

Can the minister assure the residents of British Columbia that the full resources of the federal Government of Canada, including the possible use of National Defence personnel, will be made available should the melting snow packs or continued heavy rains create an even greater potential for damage?

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, the situation is being monitored very carefully through our National Defence information centre. I think that considering our present policy, the minister is always prepared to respond to any request to help people in need. Our response will depend on the findings of our information centre and, what is requested by the Government of British Columbia which will determine with residents the amount of assistance needed.

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*[English]*

### FISHERIES

**Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Minister of Fisheries. The minister will know that the commercial salmon quota on the southern coast of Labrador has been reduced by 43 per cent this year. This comes at a time when there is a crisis in the groundfish industry and an ice blockade on the coast of Labrador.

My question is very simple. Why is it that the minister has reduced the salmon quota to Labrador fishermen, many of whom are members of the Labrador Métis Association, at this critical time? Will he now rescind this Draconian measure by his department and give back to Labrador fishermen their only means of earning a livelihood?