

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Fisher:** You are retiring.

**Mr. Herridge:** A slip of the memory, Mr. Speaker. I wish to raise a matter of urgent public importance to many persons who live along the lower levels of the various rivers in British Columbia, because of constant reports that the snowpacks at various levels are above average for this time of year. I wish to address my question to the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources. Has the Minister any information he can give the House as to the run-off that can be expected in British Columbia rivers this spring and summer?

**Hon. Arthur Laing (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources):** Mr. Speaker, this question which the hon. Member for Kootenay West raises is of very great concern to most British Columbians annually at this time of year. We were doing pretty well up to the end of April in that the run-off was greater than normal, probably 40 per cent higher than at like periods last year. However, about May 5 we had a great body of Arctic air move into the Province. In certain sections it dumped several more feet of snow on the higher levels, and this has been reflected in the run of the Fraser River, which on May 2 had reached 218,000 cubic feet per second. There was a recession from that by May 5 to 175,000 cubic feet per second at Hope. In the case of the Columbia at Trail, the same thing was going on, because whereas on May 5 the Columbia continued to rise at Trail, it had receded 2 feet at 12 Mile Ferry. This, of course, will be reflected in a turn-down further down the river.

In other words, cold weather has come into the Province and our gain of the last part of April has been turned against us. The Kootenay River is following the same trend, because it fell from 4.83 feet at Wardner on May 2 to 3.69 feet on May 5. The situation is that there are some areas of British Columbia with a higher snowfall than usual, and this is going to be a worrisky time for us. At this time of the year we rely, I think annually, on a measure of good fortune in moving the run-off at regular intervals, and we may have to depend this year on a larger measure of good fortune than usual.

I want to say, however, that in recent years, and not only the last couple of years, the Emergency Measures Organization, the armed services and the Red Cross have been far better organized in these matters than ever before, and I am quite certain that Governments at all levels will immediately be

brought into play if anything untoward happens.

**Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Doesn't the Minister think it would be much better to rely upon an ounce of prevention than a pound of mother nature's good fortune?

**Mr. Laing:** I want to explain to the hon. Member, Mr. Speaker, that we are co-operating with and have made an offer to the Government of British Columbia in respect of spending \$5 million to strengthen the dikes in the Fraser Valley. We are co-operating with the Government of British Columbia, in the person of Mr. Williston, toward the implementation of the Fraser River report which would be, as the hon. Member knows, the final and positive cure in these matters. We are playing our part.

**Mr. Howard:** The Fraser is not the only river in B.C., either.

**FISHERIES****PARTICIPATION IN INSPECTION PROCEDURE  
IN NORTH ATLANTIC**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Gerald A. Regan (Halifax):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries. Inasmuch as the Russian and United States Governments have signed an agreement, which has now been implemented, whereby inspectors from each fisheries department have been going on fishing vessels of the other country in the northwest Atlantic fishery to determine whether any illegal methods are being used, such as undersized mesh, can the Minister tell me whether the Canadian Government plans to participate in such an exchange to determine whether trawlers in that area are fishing in a legal manner?

**Hon. H. J. Robichaud (Minister of Fisheries):** Mr. Speaker, at the last meeting of the International Commission of the North Atlantic Fisheries the suggestion was made by the United States to Canada and the U.S.S.R. that inspectors from the respective countries be allowed to board vessels of other Governments in order to ensure that nets with undersized mesh and other gear are not used contrary to ICNAF regulations. This agreement was accepted and now exists between Canada and the United States, and between the United States and the U.S.S.R. The information gathered from such inspection is available to other member countries, and if we are not satisfied with the information