

FISHERIES

REQUEST FOR REFERRAL OF REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The Minister has wisely rejected many of the recommendations in the Pearse Report on the Pacific fishing industry. In view of the Minister's response to overwhelming opposition to the Report and in view of the Report on the East Coast fisheries, the Kirby Report, the Fleet Rationalization Report in British Columbia, and the U.S.-Canada Salmon Agreement, would the Minister—rather than having these documents identified as basically Government documents—be prepared to table those documents in the House of Commons so that the Committee on Fisheries and Forestry, with its new-found powers, would finally have an opportunity to deal with those situations in the fishing industry under the prerogative of Parliament rather than the Liberal Government?

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, I am very happy to hear the Hon. Member saying that I have made a wise decision. I will certainly discuss his representations with the Government House Leader to see what can possibly be done to satisfy the Hon. Member.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

BEEF STABILIZATION PLAN—MEETING OF PROVINCIAL MINISTERS

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. The provincial Ministers of Agriculture are planning to meet later this week to consider the need for a national stabilization program for the beef industry and are thus really responding to the challenge of the Minister to the Provinces several years ago. If these provincial Ministers do reach an agreement to work with the federal Government to assist hard-pressed beef producers, is the federal Government planning to move ahead with the stabilization program to assist this vital industry?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member asks a very interesting question at this time, because I was invited about a week ago to meet in Toronto tomorrow with my provincial colleagues. I will not be able to attend the meeting tomorrow. However, it will be the first time in history, if they do come up with an agreement, that they will make equity available for the beef and pork producers of this nation, that is, if they will stop top-loading programs in one Province compared to another.

I proposed a similar plan in 1978, but they would not accept it. I have waited five years. If they reach an agreement of that kind, which is necessary to put producers of these products on an equitable basis across the nation, Your Honour can be sure that we will consider it very closely. We will probably accept it. However, I know that there are other programs which are not tripartite. For instance, in some programs some might pay

Oral Questions

50 per cent of the premium on crop insurance, and there are others. If they want to become involved in spending that kind of money, I can find all kinds of programs for them.

* * *

FISHERIES

COMPILATION OF PROSECUTION STATISTICS BY RACE

Mr. Lorne Greenaway (Cariboo-Chilcotin): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and concerns an answer he gave to the Hon. Member for Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands on February 10 which set out the percentage of Caucasians versus Indians arrested for fishing violations in British Columbia. In his answer the Minister stated that, "Over the last three years in British Columbia, 80 per cent of the charges laid by my officers were against white people".

In response to my Order Paper question No. 2,049 as reported at page 8668 of *Hansard* for March 26, 1981, the Minister stated:

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans does not keep separate statistics concerning the prosecution of native Indians as this could be interpreted to be discriminatory.

How does the Minister know that 80 per cent of charges laid in B.C. were against white people, if his Department does not keep these statistics?

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, when the allegation was recently made by the Indian leadership of the Province of British Columbia that my Department bias against Indians because in one operation more Indians were charged than non-Indian people, I asked my Department to make a thorough analysis with regard to that allegation. The information that I have made public is essentially that the allegation of the Indian leadership is without any basis, any foundation. That was the reaction to the statement that my Department had a bias concerning any group. As for the substance of the question of the Hon. Member, I will certainly check and will report to him in due course to what degree the details of statistics are kept.

● (1500)

Mr. Greenaway: Madam Speaker, obviously the Minister is privy to one set of figures, and Members who ask the questions just do not get those figures.

METHOD USED IN COMPILING STATISTICS

Mr. Lorne Greenaway (Cariboo-Chilcotin): Madam Speaker, in response to the same Order Paper question it was stated that, even if a search of five years of Fisheries' prosecution files could be done, it would take up to eight person-months to complete it at a cost of \$15,000 to \$25,000 and regional staff stated that they did not have the time to do it, that they would have to contract the job out.