

*Oral Questions***FISHERIES****WEST COAST SALMON FISHERY—REQUEST FOR HABITAT POLICY COMMITMENT**

**Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Four years ago the Government commissioned Dr. Pearse to do a report on the West Coast fishery because everyone knew then that the fishery on the West Coast was in a crisis situation. Dr. Pearse reported in 1982 that the salmon fishery was in crisis. He said that “the economic problems and other concerns are rooted in fundamental deficiencies in fishery policy”. The Minister a few weeks ago blamed the fishermen.

In view of the fact that for over a year the Minister’s advisory council has been proposing policy to the Minister, all of which has been ignored, and the fact that basic to recovery of the fishery is the need for rehabilitation of habitat—streams, rivers, and estuaries—can the Prime Minister say why, in the four strategic alternatives outlined in a January 5 departmental working paper, there is not a single mention of habitat or the salmonid enhancement program, and can the Government and the Prime Minister make a commitment now to a policy of net gain of habitat for the West Coast fishery?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member asks a question based on what he calls a departmental memo or policy paper. It is not my practice to comment on confidential documents.

**CONSULTATIONS WITH MINISTER**

**Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Prime Minister can comment on Dr. Pearse’s report, which his Government commissioned. He said that “the economic problems and other concerns are rooted in fundamental deficiencies in fishery policy”. The Cruickshank Report, which his Government commissioned, said that the problem is the direct result of government inefficiency, and a series of bad management decisions and inefficiency.

● (1420)

My question involves consultation, of which the Minister has made a great deal. During this period of 14 months of consultation with the Minister’s Advisory Council, specific proposals have been put to the Minister, and ignored. Over 400 frustrated, exasperated, and angry fishermen are in Ottawa now to try to get the Government to listen and to act.

How does the Government explain that a paper dated January 30, which was given to the Minister’s Advisory Council just the other day and which contained nothing but a list of questions, leads with a letter from the Deputy Minister stating that the paper is only “a general discussion paper”, “contains no arguments for or against anything”, “should not be interpreted as reflecting any preferences or conclusions of the Minister, the Department or the Government”, and completely ignores the specific strategic alternatives submitted to the same Council on January 5?

I ask the Prime Minister whether it is the purpose of his Minister and his Government to make a mockery and a sham out of the work of the Minister’s Advisory Council.

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** No, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Fraser:** The answer, of course, does not belie the facts.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Very typical.

**Mr. Fraser:** The fact is that the Minister’s Advisory Council is being ignored.

**FISH HABITAT REHABILITATION**

**Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South):** Mr. Speaker, Dr. Pearse of the Prime Minister’s own royal commission said that “available data is limited to the large river systems so the hundreds of small streams . . . which support half of all salmon production” could not be analyzed. In view of the fact that the Government will not even consider more than a “moderate level of fish habitat rehabilitation”, will the Government commit itself now to bringing forward salmonid enhancement second stage funding for a full and complete inventory and an aggressive campaign of action to restore habitat, or is the Government satisfied with only cutting catches and reducing the fleet? Is the policy to keep as many fishermen as possible in—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The Hon. Member should ask his question. It is his second supplementary. Would he please ask his question.

**Mr. Fraser:** I will put the question directly, Mr. Speaker. Is it the policy of the Prime Minister’s Government—and he has presided for 15 years over the decline of the West Coast fishery—to keep as many fishermen as possible in, which it ought to be, or to get as many as possible out?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is really asking a rhetorical question. I do not think the improvements made on the West Coast through the Salmonid Enhancement Program are as he states. I do not think he is ignorant of the progress made during the seventies and the early eighties through that program.

He is asking me to comment on words spoken by Dr. Pearse some year and a half or two years ago, in a report which was at the basis of the Minister’s consultations and on which the Minister himself has made answers repeatedly in the House. I will be happy to take this latest representation of the Member to the Minister and make sure that he is informed of it.

**REQUEST FOR FUNDING TO PROTECT JOBS**

**Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. The West Coast fishing industry is in a crisis, and that crisis is understood by everyone in British Columbia. It would seem at the moment