

FISHERIES

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Fisheries I want to put a question to my bosom pal for St. John's East, the parliamentary secretary and future minister. He will know that the Harris report—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simmons: It is all right. The parliamentary secretary will—

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the hon. member could put the question to whoever is supposed to answer?

Mr. Simmons: The parliamentary secretary will realize that about two weeks ago the finishing touches were put on the Harris report in St. John's. Could he indicate when he expects his minister will receive the report and when it will be made public? Does he know whether it will deal with the economic and social price which is being paid as a result of the northern cod situation? Finally, does he anticipate that there will be further quota cuts recommended by that report?

Mr. Ross Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I would say everyone in Canada not just in Atlantic Canada, are anxiously awaiting the report of Dr. Harris with the analysis that he and the people who have been working with him have done in addressing the problems which face particularly the science, the quotas and the allocation of fish. It is not known exactly when the report will be provided to the minister. It is my understanding that his committee is still meeting to discuss the report in order to finalize it. I can assure the hon. member and the House that when the report has been received and the minister has had a chance to look at it, obviously he will make it available in this House, in Atlantic Canada and across the country. I think at that time he will be anxious to see how Canadians view the report and ask for suggestions on how it can be implemented to improve the Atlantic fishery and address the problems, not only in Newfoundland but also in Nova Scotia.

• (1200)

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, I will direct my supplementary to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Routine Proceedings

Now that the Prime Minister has grudgingly come to the conclusion that there is a crisis in the Atlantic fishery, can the Deputy Prime Minister indicate whether it is the Prime Minister's intention to visit the Atlantic region, particularly Newfoundland, in the near future in response to a number of invitations to do so in order to take a first-hand look at the crisis and get an idea first hand of how deep that crisis is.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister did not come to the conclusion that there was a crisis in the Atlantic fishery grudgingly. He acknowledged that. He said there was not a crisis in Atlantic Canada. He said there was a crisis in Atlantic fisheries. Premiers have made the same statement.

I want to assure the hon. member that the Prime Minister has taken a personal interest in this issue, as have cabinet ministers. This is very, very important. We are working on several options that will be available which I am sure will be very satisfactory and acceptable to the hon. member. I expect that a fairly comprehensive program will be announced in due course.

The Prime Minister has visited the Atlantic region on a number of occasions and has been warmly received. I am sure he will do so again and that he will be warmly received when he returns.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice, Attorney general of Canada and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour of tabling, in both official languages, the government's response to several petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]