

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): We are making loans or advances to commercial fishermen whose livelihood has been cut off as a result of mercury pollution. Those loans are limited to people whose livelihood is related to commercial fishing. We have not made advances in areas where there is no ban on fishing, nor have we been making advances for sports fishery or related activities to people such as marina operators. The province of Ontario has been looking after the latter cases.

HUDSON BAY—LEVEL OF MERCURY IN
BELUGA WHALES

Mr. Paul St. Pierre (Coast Chilcotin): I have a supplementary question for the minister regarding mercury pollution. Can the minister advise the House whether the mercury pollution level in beluga whales in Hudson Bay has reached dangerous proportions and, if so, is the Eskimo fishery in Rankin Inlet in danger?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): We have received the results of further tests on polluted whales canned in a whale factory in Rankin Inlet, and nearly all these tests show the level to be above our acceptable limit of .5 parts per million. However, other fish species have been relatively free of mercury, so there is no problem in respect of other species. Our information is that these whales have picked up the mercury at the mouths of rivers in James Bay and at the mouth of the Nelson River system.

TASK FORCE ON SOURCES OF MERCURY
CONTAMINATION

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): In view of the continuing indications of mercury pollution throughout the environment, particularly in Canada, is the minister considering setting up a special task force to inquire into the sources of mercury poisoning in so many places in Canada?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): We do have a special task force dealing with this problem. I might say that there is a modest level or a background of mercury in all waters. It is only where there are exceptional levels of mercury that we have a problem. We think we have identified nearly all of these areas now. We are improving our background information and dealing with local problems as they arise.

[Mr. Danforth.]

ACTION RESPECTING PRODUCTION AND
CONTROL OF DDT

Mr. P. V. Noble (Grey-Simcoe): My question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the government taken any action with respect to production and control of DDT and, if so what is it?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): I cannot give a complete answer to that due to the limitation of time in this period, but many changes have been made related to the purposes for which licences will be issued and labels authorized in so far as the distribution of DDT is concerned. As a matter of fact, we have reduced the purposes by about 90 per cent from the period prior to making the announcement several months ago.

FINANCE

ACTION FOLLOWING MOORE REPORT ON FOREIGN
CONTROL OF SECURITIES FIRMS

Mr. Max Saltzman (Waterloo): I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Finance. In view of the Moore study recommending that an increase in the foreign control of Canadian securities firms be prohibited, can he indicate what, if any, action the government intends to take on the study's recommendations?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): We have only had the Moore Committee report for a very short period of time and we are studying its recommendations carefully. I would like, however, to welcome the report and to express appreciation to the securities industry and to the chairman and members of the committee for the comprehensive study they have produced. While I do not wish to comment at this time on the specific recommendations in the report, I will observe that the underlying principles of the report as regards foreign ownership in the industry are very much in line with government policy concerning other segments of the financial community.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It seems to me that the answer which the minister is giving now is more in the form of a statement which should be made on motions. I will have to seek the co-operation of hon. members in connection with supplementary questions. Many hon. members have been rising diligently and patiently for the last 30 minutes and are anxious for an opportunity to put their questions. Perhaps the hon. member for Waterloo may be allowed a supplementary question.