

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, December 3, 1971

The House met at 11 a.m.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WITHDRAWAL BY MEMBER FOR PEACE RIVER FROM HOUSE LEADERS' MEETINGS ON INCOME TAX BILL

Mr. W. G. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I rise briefly on a point of order to say publicly in the House what I have already told the government House leader privately, that because of circumstances I no longer intend to participate in meetings of House leaders in connection with Bill C-259 and the operation of the modified closure, guillotine, bulldozer rule in that respect.

Because of the interpretation of the rule which is that it is not necessary to go behind the statement made in the House by the minister. I do not impugn his veracity at all, but in the circumstances, unless there is in fact a united position taken by the three opposition parties as to the need to hold up part of the bill for reasonable debate and discussion, the whole proceedings become farcical. For that reason, with respect to this bill and the operation of rule 75 I do not intend to participate, nor will there be a representative of this party.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a word on the point of order raised by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin). It does seem to me that, even though we are now under closure in respect of the committee stage of this bill—and our position on that is well known—it is useful to organize such time as we have.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I therefore regret the decision of my good friend not to attend our meetings. Maybe he could indicate his wishes to me and I could speak on his behalf. At any rate, I hope we shall find a way to use to the best possible advantage such time as has been left by the government for consideration of Bill C-259 in the Committee of the Whole stage.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

MISCELLANEOUS ESTIMATES

Eighth report of Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates, in the two official languages—Mr. Leblanc (Laurier)

[Editor's Note: For text of above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

[English]

FISHERIES

STATEMENT ON AGREEMENT WITH NORWAY RESPECTING SEALS AND PHASING OUT OF CERTAIN FISHING PRACTICES OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries): Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a short statement on seals. I should like to describe the agreement negotiated with Norway and I should also like to say a word about the phasing out of the traditional fishing practices of European countries from Canada's territorial sea and new fishing zones.

As hon. members know, we have been pushing our fisheries' limits seaward. We have drawn baselines and fishery closing lines across the mouths of our major bays and inlets. We have also extended our territorial waters 12 miles beyond these lines.

In the eyes of some long-distance fishing nations this policy is expansionist in the extreme. For our part, we believe that these moves are well-founded and essential for the sound management of the fish and marine animals which live near our shores.

In recent months negotiations have been conducted with Norway, Denmark, the United Kingdom, France, Spain and Portugal. They have culminated, or will shortly culminate, in agreements which will not only recognize Canada's jurisdiction in these areas off our coast but will also see the progressive elimination of traditional foreign-based fishing operations in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and in our territorial sea along the Atlantic coast.

• (11:10 a.m.)

This is a major accomplishment. Not only have we acted on our own initiative by drawing fisheries lines authorized by Parliament but we are also getting other nations to formally admit that these lines exist and that the waters inside them are within Canada's fisheries jurisdiction.

The hon. member for Gander-Willington (Mr. Lundrigan) is concerned about Norwegian fishermen continuing to take seals along certain stretches of our coast off Labrador and northeastern Newfoundland. I would point out to him that the seal herds in the North Atlantic are often found far out at sea. The only way in which we can ensure that the total stock of seals—both in national and international waters—is well managed is to have an agreement in respect of them as a whole and share the catch with other participating countries, in this particular case with Norway only.

Under our new agreement Canada and Norway are setting up a joint commission on sealing. This commission, manned by some of the world's top experts on conservation, will set quotas. These quotas will apply to the entire herd in the North Atlantic, offshore, and occasionally near our shores. The quotas they recommend to