

Inquiries of the Ministry

on whether future programs on which announcements have not yet been made will be government policy.

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. Since the Minister of Fisheries in his telegram announced that the new government policy would not take effect before the end of the current fiscal year, that is before next March, will the Prime Minister take steps to see to it that the Canadian government policy in respect of assistance to the Atlantic groundfish industry is announced immediately in order to avert a crisis whereby, as the Leader of the Opposition stated, thousands of Canadians would lose their jobs due to lack of action on the part of the government?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I have nothing to add to what the Minister of Fisheries has said in this house repeatedly.

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the Prime Minister indicate whether the fishing industry in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia can expect some immediate assistance now, before the government brings forward a policy in a few months' time as has been promised?

Mr. Trudeau: The answer is the same, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West): May I ask a supplementary question. Will the Prime Minister at least undertake to set aside a day, either Friday or Monday, in order that this very serious situation can be dealt with by means of a general discussion in the house?

Mr. Trudeau: Ditto, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Stanfield: I wonder if the Prime Minister realizes the urgency of the situation?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the minister is very actively working on this problem in his office.

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member rising on a question of privilege.

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, prior to the little flurry, I did indicate that I was going to rise on a question of privilege to bring this matter to the attention of the house in such a way

that we could obtain a statement from the minister today. Unfortunately I was not able to do so. All I am asking is, I wonder is there any way the house can obtain from the Prime Minister the sort of sensitive kind of understanding which would indicate to the people of Canada that the Prime Minister does not consider this to be a frivolous matter.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member will realize that the point he is raising now is not a question of privilege. It may be a grievance. There is a distinction between a grievance and a question of privilege. I doubt very much if the point he is making now qualifies under the rules of the house as a question of privilege.

Mr. Lundrigan: What I want to know is this. Could we get from the Prime Minister an answer to questions which have been posed to him in mannerly fashion, so we may get the sympathy of the federal government on this matter?

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister or the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the large number of people on the Atlantic coast who will be out of work within the next ten days, numbering in the thousands, has either the Prime Minister or the Minister of Manpower and Immigration formulated any plans to take care of these people and provide them with some means of earning a livelihood?

Mr. Trudeau: The Minister of Fisheries was in the house yesterday and he will be here tomorrow. I would not claim, nor would the Minister of Manpower and Immigration claim, to know as much about fisheries as does the Minister of Fisheries. The minister is not here precisely because we have devised a system to permit ministers to devote more time to trying to solve problems that arise within their areas of jurisdiction, and this is exactly what the minister is doing now.

Mr. McGrath: Will you permit one further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the house leader? Would the house leader give consideration, in view of the urgency of this matter, to changing the order of business and bringing forward the estimates of the Department of Fisheries tomorrow?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council): I have had conversations with hon. gentlemen opposite, Mr. Speaker, and there seems to be some agreement to having