

Oral Questions

Mr. Nelson: My supplementary is for the Minister of the Fisheries. Can the minister assure the House that similar restrictive quotas, such as those recently placed on the Bering Sea halibut fishery, will not be extended to the fishing grounds in the Gulf of Alaska?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries): Mr. Speaker, I think I can give the House that assurance.

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PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES

NATURE OF APPOINTMENTS

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister and it is in relation to the order in council he tabled earlier today. In view of his often declared intention to rotate parliamentary secretaries to recognize and reward talent and to promote those who are able, and in view of the fact that the 17 names he tabled today are identical, with the exception of one addition of a person who will share a part of the responsibility with another man who is already there, with those of the previous holders of this office, is that an admission that there is no talent to recognize and no one to promote or is it just another flip-flop in the Prime Minister's political philosophy?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would care to refer to the press release that will be issued this afternoon—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: Oh, oh, what? Surely it is permissible to issue a press release without incurring the wrath of the opposition—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: —concerning an order in council which has been tabled in the House previously. If the hon. member wishes to refer to the practice established in the previous parliament, he will see that it was to give parliamentary secretaries what I call double terms so they would be in office for a period of approximately two years. I figured that this would permit the rotation of a large part of our talent within a given parliament—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: —and at the same time permit a stint in office which should be long enough to allow a member to acquire good experience as a parliamentary secretary.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nowlan: I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. Since it is a standpat parliamentary situation with a few musical chairs with the same names, does the Prime Minister anticipate a cabinet shuffle with whatever talent he has left prior to the next session?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for St. Paul's.

[Mr. Sharp.]

Mr. Nowlan: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I think the Prime Minister—

Mr. Hees: No.

Mr. Nowlan: My friend, the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings says "no", but I do think the Prime Minister had half risen from his seat. This is a rather interesting question in view of the precarious state of parliament and the precarious state of many people in it.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, as to half rising, I realized that you are a better judge than I of what is a serious question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We are running short of time. Perhaps the Chair would be allowed to recognize the hon. member for St. Paul's. We will have to call orders of the day very soon.

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TRANSPORT

URBAN TRANSPORTATION—INQUIRY AS TO LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND RAILWAY RELOCATION PROGRAM

Mr. Ron Atkey (St. Paul's): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. In view of the commitment made on behalf of the government by his colleague, the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, at the tri-level conference in Edmonton on October 27 to establish a transport development corporation to co-ordinate research, development, promotion and marketing of urban transportation systems and the commitment to undertake a program of railway relocation in urban centres on a 50 per cent cost-sharing basis, would the minister advise what has happened to the bill to implement these policies which his colleague told the tri-level delegates in Edmonton would be tabled in the House before the middle of November?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think the bill is in its final drafting form now and it is likely that it will be introduced in the House.

Mr. Atkey: I have a supplementary question for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Given the fantastic growth in the number of public transit users in our urban areas and the resulting strain on existing bus, streetcar, subway and dial-a-bus facilities, would the minister explain his unfulfilled promise made in Edmonton to the tri-level delegates and the millions of public transit users in our cities who cannot await a further throne speech of vague election goodies—

● (1500)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Okanagan Boundary.