

Oral Questions

working closely with those utilities to develop the safest and most cost-effective disposal mechanisms.

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UPPER NICOLA BAND

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, May 27, the Indians of the Upper Nicola Band erected barricades and dug trenches on the Douglas Lake Ranch road. The RCMP were met with threats of violence when they served a court injunction to remove the illegal blockade.

What action has the government taken to stop this illegal roadblock?

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):

[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the hon. member that the off reserve nature of the dispute makes it a provincial matter. I understand that it is being addressed by the relevant parties.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, clearly the Constitution Acts of 1867 and 1982 state in section 24 that the federal government has a statutory responsibility for Indians and lands reserved for Indians. Clearly this is a federal government responsibility. These people are breaking the law.

Will the government desert the people of my riding, as it has done before, or will the government cut off the funding to the Upper Nicola Band until it removes the roadblocks?

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):

[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]

[English]

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member just said that these people are breaking the law. I did not get the first part of the question. I was not sure whether he meant the people who own the Douglas Lake cattle company are breaking the law or the aboriginal people are breaking the law.

However, if requested by the First Nations and the province, my departmental officials would be prepared to assist in resolving the dispute.

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UPPER NICOLA BAND

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Indian

Affairs and Northern Development, regarding the same issue of the Upper Nicola Band.

• (1500)

The matter of grievance is definitely in the federal area of responsibility. A major confrontation is taking place. Nearly 200 First Nations people are on site this afternoon. There is bound to be violence on that blockade if action is not taken.

Will the parliamentary secretary ask the minister to involve himself personally, go out to the site and attempt to resolve these critical issues before violence occurs?

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):

[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I just responded to the previous question. I am sure we are all aware of the potential for an accident and that cooler heads should prevail on this issue. If requested the minister will be prepared to meet, but only if requested by the First Nations, the province and the others involved.

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FISHERIES

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

As there is an upcoming NAFO meeting in Toronto, can the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans provide the House with any new information on the status of the enforcement and quota measures that were agreed to in April? Could he also tell us what Canada's position will be at this meeting?

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her question and for her interest in the NAFO meeting in Toronto next week.

At this meeting all of the NAFO member states will consider the enforcement provisions contained within the Canada-EU enforcement agreement. It is our hope, indeed our desire, that the provisions contained in the agreement will be endorsed by members of NAFO.

I spoke as recently as yesterday to the ministers of fisheries from Norway and Iceland. My officials have spoken with representatives of other countries to ensure good strong support for these measures.

The current status of the agreement is that we have 100 per cent observer coverage working quite well offshore.