

Oral Questions

welfare of the 200,000 people he mentioned; and yes, we will take his representation under advisement, as the minister assured the House we would last week.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

ALCAN PROJECT IN B.C.—DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON INDIAN LANDS

Mr. Lorne McCuish (Prince George-Bulkley Valley): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. I wonder if he is in the House.

An hon. Member: None of them is present; this is Monday.

Mr. McCuish: In that case, I shall again direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister. As Kemano completion will cause flooding of Indian lands and will adversely affect aboriginal fishing rights and game habitats, is the minister consulting with Indian leaders, and is he prepared to intervene to compensate for the weakness of his colleague in the Ministry of the Environment?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I shall draw the hon. member's representations to the attention of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. As the hon. member knows, the minister is in contact with the Indian leaders of this country on a regular and constant basis, and he has their welfare very much at heart.

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● (1420)

FISHERIES

ALCAN PROJECT IN B.C.—EXAMINATION OF POLLUTION THEREFROM

Mr. Lorne Greenaway (Cariboo-Chilcotin): Madam Speaker, I wish to follow up the subject raised by my colleague, the hon. member for Prince George-Bulkley Valley. The concern he has voiced cannot be overemphasized. This scheme, as it is proposed right now by the Aluminum Company of Canada, will divert the waters from major spawning grounds of coastal and inland fish species, and will result in untold ecological consequences over the entire area of central and northern British Columbia.

Therefore, my question to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans or, in his absence, to the next man down the totem pole, is this.

Mr. Crosbie: You are pretty low now.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Greenaway: Can the minister give the House an assurance that before the further damming of any rivers in B.C. by

the Aluminum Company of Canada is permitted, he will exercise his clearcut jurisdiction in assessing the project, not in the light of guidelines that existed 30 years ago but in today's context?

Mr. George Henderson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans stated last week, before the committee on fisheries, that he would investigate this whole question to see where his authority lies, and that he would impose that authority if the situation warranted it.

Mr. Greenaway: Madam Speaker, I would like to remind the minister that he has the clearcut legal right to stop this development. Is the minister now prepared to call for a federal inquiry which would permit public input, or is he prepared to allow the Aluminum Company of Canada to proceed regardless of the consequences?

Mr. Henderson: Madam Speaker, the minister also stated at the same committee meeting that he would favour a public inquiry into the situation.

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AGRICULTURE

DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN WESTERN CANADA—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ALLEVIATE—SHORTAGE OF FEED

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, I would like to address my question, in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture and the minister for economic development, to the acting prime minister. Each weekend as I return to my home in western Canada I see the crop conditions further deteriorating. They have been holding their own, but in spite of the cool weather this past week they are beginning to turn yellow, wither and die.

In view of this very serious problem that has been developing, can the minister tell us when we can expect an announcement from this government with regard to co-operation with the provinces to look after the drought situation?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, I should like to reply to the hon. member that recently I went to a western province. I met with the director of PFRA there three times. A group of ministers of the government also visited the area. I should like to point out that I do not know of any government of the prairie provinces complaining in any way about lack of co-operation from the federal government in that regard.

I signed an agreement a week ago with the resource and finance ministers of Manitoba about the problem of drought. Last week the cabinet also approved a series of new measures which will have to be implemented immediately, and a minister of the western area was made responsible for monitoring