

in the House but just could not understand what was going on.

**Mr. Hees:** Wind it up, Ben.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, may I ask a supplementary question following the minister's red herring?

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Stanfield:** I should like to ask the minister why, following the several months of debate and discussion in the country of the white paper proposals, the government has not seen fit to change even one of those proposals?

**Mr. Benson:** Mr. Speaker, the position is that the white paper is before the House of Commons Committee and the Senate Committee. I believe in the committees of the House of Commons and the Senate, and I wish my hon. friend would, too.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys):** The minister can say that because there is a Liberal majority on the committees.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I will recognize the Leader of the Opposition in a moment. Will the hon. member kindly resume his seat? It seems to me that we are now entering into a debate and I respectfully suggest there is not much point in pursuing this line of questioning.

**Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys):** Let us hear what the minister has to say.

**Mr. Speaker:** I understand the Leader of the Opposition has a supplementary. I will recognize him.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, I understand that the minister has great respect for Parliament and the committee system when it suits his convenience but really, since many thousands of people in the country are giving serious study to these proposals, would it not be proper for the minister to indicate to the country at large what changes, if any, the minister has decided upon following the discussions that have already taken place?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I suggest to the Minister of Finance and to the Leader of the Opposition that if this kind of statement is to be made it should not be during the question period. It should be made by way of a state-

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ment on motions. I do not think the minister would be in order if he attempted to make that kind of statement.

### POLLUTION

#### MERCURY CONTENT IN LAKE WINNIPEG AND SASKATCHEWAN RIVER FISH

**Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill):** I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry. In view of the orders which have been made curtailing commercial fishing in Lake Winnipeg and parts of the Saskatchewan River and in view of the fact that sports fishing is going to be permitted in this area, is the minister willing to make a full statement in the House with regard to the findings of his officials as to the mercury content in these fish with relation to human consumption?

**Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry):** Yes, Mr. Speaker. We will soon be able to give an analysis of the situation. I met yesterday in Manitoba with the Hon. Sidney Green to discuss this subject. We expect to reach an understanding shortly.

#### LAKE WINNIPEG—COMPENSATION TO FISHERMEN—SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** In line with the answers the Minister of Fisheries gave last week, has he reached an agreement, about which he can now give some details, with regard to compensation to the fishermen of Lake Winnipeg and the other areas of Manitoba which have been affected by Mercury pollution?

**Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry):** We have an understanding with the government of Manitoba and jointly we will be negotiating with the fishermen to arrive at a formula, which I will wish to put to my colleagues concerning financial compensation on the Prairie.

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister a supplementary question. When the minister makes his statement on this matter, will he also report to the House the results of any discussions that have gone on with the authorities in the United States concerning the source of the mercury pollution of the Red River and Lake Winnipeg?

**Mr. Davis:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.