

Oral Questions

Mr. Waddell: I am asking him to make some real dints into private industry, so let me ask the minister this. He referred to the national energy policy. When the policy came out, shares of Petrofina were \$60 to \$65 on the market. Now the government is buying the shares for about \$120, at a much inflated price. Can the minister indicate how he would control in future takeovers the price paid. Could the minister also tell this House and the public how Petro-Canada will pay for those shares of Petrofina?

Mr. Malone: Tell us, Allan.

Mr. Lawrence: Make the rich pay.

Mr. Paproski: How about Canada Savings Bonds?

Mr. MacEachen: Madam Speaker, on the first point which the hon. member has made, it has been the experience in previous acquisitions, either by Petro-Canada or by private companies, that in order to acquire control of a new acquisition usually a premium is required for the purchase of shares. The hon. member can debate the validity of that, but that has been the experience in this and in previous cases.

It has not been determined finally how the acquisition will be paid for, although the hon. member will recall that in the budget it was indicated there would be a Canadian ownership charge that would be used to finance acquisitions. It will be through this method that equity by the Government of Canada will be provided.

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AGRICULTURE

POTATO PRODUCTION AND MARKETING—INQUIRY WHEN COMMISSION OF INQUIRY WILL BE ESTABLISHED

Mr. Eymard Corbin (Madawaska-Victoria): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. It is in connection with the report of the National Farm Products Marketing Council which he released yesterday. The minister will recall that the council makes a very serious statement in its report respecting questionable marketing practices in the potato industry. These are widespread and it seems producers have been intimidated from talking publicly about their problems within the industry.

When will the minister establish a commission of inquiry into all aspects of the potato industry? This is a request I have made on a number of occasions in this House.

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I do not know whether I can go as far as the hon. member would like when he mentions a commission of inquiry into aspects of the potato industry. The National Farm Products Marketing Council has held some pretty detailed hearings. I am very concerned about some of the statements which are in their report to the effect that some producers appeared to be scared to give the evidence they really wanted to. We are investigating that and if we find that this is substantially

correct, I intend to recommend some kind of commission of hearing.

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FISHERIES

OPTIONS RESPECTING CONSERVATION OF SALMON STOCKS

Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. A few days ago the minister announced a complete closure of the Fraser River which will affect some 1,000 gill net fishermen whose livelihood is dependent upon that fishery. The decision was taken because of the seriously threatened state of the chinook salmon stocks.

My question is this: Why has the minister not chose to adopt some of the other management options put forward by his consultants and departmental officials which would have spread the burden of conservation more equitably among other sectors of the industry in British Columbia waters?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, what happened some days ago was that, as a result of consultation, all groups in the industry seemed to recommend very stringent conservation measures. I discussed that this morning with the assistant deputy minister who is stationed on the west coast. We are looking at ways to make other groups of the industry share in the conservation measures that we are envisaging. The final decision on this issue will possibly be made before next week.

Mr. Siddon: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to know that the decision is not final, but it has come to our attention that by shutting out the Fraser River gill net fishermen from the sockeye runs, that unfulfilled catch will be granted to the sein fish fleet. Would the minister clarify that question? Would the minister also admit that the problem with chinook stocks really results from a lack of effective enforcement over the years with regard to poaching in particular, and from the lack of this government's commitment to get on with resolving the Canada-U.S. agreement which is crucial to the completion of enhancement projects on the Fraser River?

Mr. LeBlanc: Madam Speaker, everyone who knows a little bit about the Pacific fishery knows that if we had enhanced, or if we were to have enhanced, the Fraser River stocks without bringing some equilibrium to the wild stocks, we could do very serious damage to the chinook stock which is so precious to us. We are endeavouring to take action with the full co-operation of the industry.