

Oral Questions

date of the change in the law, that they do not apply to other inmates who were in penitentiary prior to the passage of the amendments?

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): That is right, Mr. Speaker, and I believe the right hon. member voted for the bill to make the rules more stringent. The new rules relating to release on parole apply only to those who were convicted following passage of the law; that very provision is in the legislation. It was felt that it was not right to apply more restrictive rules to people who had been sentenced previously, and I think this is a tradition that is usually followed with laws of this kind.

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● (1140)

HEALTH

STUDY OF MERCURY CONTENT OF FISH IN WHITE DOG AND GRASSY NARROWS INDIAN RESERVES—REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of National Health and Welfare and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the information made public yesterday in the Ontario legislature and on a CBC program that the Department of National Health and Welfare had conducted a study on the amount of mercury found in fish in the Grassy Narrows and White Dog reserve area, an amount 30 times the permissible level, would the Prime Minister discuss with the Minister of National Health and Welfare the making public of that very serious report prepared by the department?

Miss Coline Campbell (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the hon. member that that report was tabled in the House in December 1973.

SUGGESTED COOPERATION WITH ONTARIO IN SUPPLYING NON-CONTAMINATED FOOD TO INDIANS ON WHITE DOG AND GRASSY NARROWS RESERVES

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the Prime Minister. In view of the statement yesterday by the Ontario Minister of Health to the effect that his department had suggested to the federal government that it work on a program of alternate food supplies for the Indians adversely affected in that area, which proposal was rejected by the federal government, would the Prime Minister discuss with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Minister of National Health and Welfare the possibility of working with the Ontario government to supply food which is not contaminated to the people concerned?

Mrs. Iona Campagnolo (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, the responsibility for developing an alternate economic base rests with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. However, this

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

must take place in consultation with both the bands and the province and action is being taken on that front at this time. I will refer the matter to the minister who no doubt will have more information for the hon. member and the House in the near future.

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[Translation]

GRAIN

PROPOSED REPRESENTATION OF EASTERN CANADA ON WHEAT BOARD IN VIEW OF FEED GRAIN SITUATION

Mr. Albert Bécharde (Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Justice, who is responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board.

In view of the never-ending problem of supply and of the cost of feed grains in eastern Canada, could the hon. Minister tell this House whether he intends to put forward an amendment to the Canadian Wheat Board Act, in order to enable Eastern producers representation on the executive of this Board on which only Western Grain producers are represented?

[English]

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, the commissioners of the Canadian Wheat Board are not representative of particular areas but of expertise which enables them to do the job of disposing of the grain produced in Canada. It does happen that one of the commissioners was born in one of the central provinces, but that is irrelevant to the situation. The present situation with regard to feed grain is progressing very satisfactorily. The early delays caused by the strike are being made up by the rapid movement of a very large volume of grain into the domestic feed grain market and I have every confidence the needs of the producers throughout Canada can be met given a new degree of alertness on the part of the agencies in this regard.

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ENERGY

POSSIBILITY OF OIL IN GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE IN VIEW OF GAS FIND OFF COAST OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I should like to pose a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Is there anything he is in a position to state regarding the indications, if any, of petroleum products being present in the Gulf of St. Lawrence in economic quantities as a result of the recent gas find off the east coast of Prince Edward Island?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I should like to thank the hon. member for notice of the question. The find off East Point by Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas rather than being significant in itself is significant in respect of the addition it makes to geological knowledge. Similar structures apparently do exist in the gulf which if they have similar shows of hydrocarbons would give an indication of a