

Oral Questions

but under that program we have already paid out around \$40 million to farmers.

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[Translation]

THE CONSTITUTION

REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH OF MARCH 23 BE PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED

Mr. Alexandre Cyr (Gaspé): Madam Speaker, I should like to ask the right hon. Prime Minister whether it is his intention to order a separate reprint of the *Debates* of March 23 with a view to sending to all provincial premiers, to the leaders of the provincial political parties, and particularly to the members of Parliament of Her Majesty the Queen in London a copy of the speech he delivered in this House on the patriation of the Constitution.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I will be very pleased to consider the excellent suggestion of the hon. member. Perhaps we might all agree to make sure that the speeches on the same subject made by the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Leader of the New Democratic Party will be printed at the same time at the expense of the Crown. We could then send them to all the people mentioned by the hon. member.

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[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

QUEBEC COMPONENT OF F-18 FIGHTER AIRCRAFT CONTRACT

Mr. Girve Fretz (Erie): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence. It concerns recent press reports that pressure from the Quebec liberal caucus has caused bidding to be reopened on the contracts for the F-18 fighter because there would be little work for Quebec and all bids had come from Ontario, Manitoba and New Brunswick. As Quebec has been promised \$1.5 billion worth of work on the F-18 by the Liberals, the rules will change to allow an unsolicited bid from Canadair, a Quebec-based Crown corporation. Can the minister inform the House if these allegations are correct? If so, what is the point of calling for bids if, six months later, the bidding is reopened to accommodate partisan political practice, in other words, pork-barrelling?

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, I think it is well known to all members of this House which were the commitments made when we chose the F-18 aircraft about a year ago. The bidding has been going normally. Nothing has been changed on the international principle of the bidding. Actually, the management of the contract itself is done by the Department of Supply and Services or the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

As far as I am concerned, nothing either illegal or erroneous has been done.

Mr. Crosbie: Answer the question.

Mr. Fretz: Madam Speaker, if the minister alleges that the bids have not been reopened, what is the reason for the delays which constitute a loss of work for Canadian plants?

Mr. Lamontagne: Madam Speaker, I would suggest that the hon. member ask McDonnell Douglas about the delays if any.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: They are not in the House. Let's ask Herbie Gray.

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FISHERIES

SCALLOP CATCHES ON GEORGES BANK—REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN LIMITS

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the hon. Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. At the present time the size of scallops is smaller than usual being caught on Georges Bank. This has resulted in fisheries officers carrying out a survey of landings and some eleven ships have been found to have scallops of a size below the present legal limit.

In light of the resulting controversy, will the minister consider decreasing the catch limit per trip from 30,000 pounds to 20,000 pounds? At the same time, will he consider increasing the scallop count per pound from 40 to 50 pounds in the hope of stabilizing this section of the Canadian fishing industry? Also with the minister make proposals to his U.S. counterpart to the effect that the United States consider taking similar actions on Georges Bank?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, we have known for some time that the scallops stocks were under heavy pressure. This is not only related to what we consider heavier than usual fishing on the part of U.S. fishermen. Biologists have been warning us about this for some years.

However, the possibility of a breakdown of conversation, attitudes and measures, would obviously significantly increase the problems of all fishermen, Canadian and American.

In the conversations we had with Secretary Baldrige when he was here we tried to develop a conservation plan for all fishermen from both countries.

As to the suggestion from the hon. member, we have been meeting with the fishermen and processors in the area. We will be looking at the recommendations which they have made to us, with an open mind, and I hope that I will be able to announce some changes in the days to come.