

Oral Questions

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, at the time the request was made for aid for the maritime provinces, prices in Alberta were averaging \$4 a hundredweight, \$3 a hundredweight bulk delivery from Manitoba. Since that time one of the delivery points for Manitoba in the United States has gone bankrupt. However, I will consider the hon. member's representation, and if there is need we will come up with a plan to assist those producers who are in financial difficulty as a result.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

POSSIBILITY OF REASSESSMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH PORTUGAL—GOVERNMENT POSITION ON REQUEST FOR EARLY MEETING OF NATO

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the present trend toward the militant Communist-led left in our NATO ally Portugal, has the minister any plan for reassessing Canada's diplomatic role with this country, and will the minister be giving leadership to western democratic countries by supporting the United Kingdom's request for an urgent summit meeting of NATO countries in May?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the latter part of the question, the answer was given yesterday, both by the Acting Prime Minister and myself. We are certainly in agreement in principle with the concept of a NATO summit. We are asking some questions about the timing, but we have expressed a willingness, if the meeting is to take place, to be present.

With respect to Portugal, I believe the situation is not sufficiently clear at the moment to undertake the type of action that the hon. member suggests. An election is to be held in that country and we hope this will provide the people of that country with an opportunity to elect in a free way a government. Following that election would seem to me the appropriate time to assess the situation. I would assure the hon. member that the matter is under very close study, and following that election it may be possible to make a clearer judgment.

Mr. Crouse: A brief supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The minister has stated that there will be freely held elections in Portugal. I would ask him to explain how this can be possible when one party has been ruled out of entering the list in that particular country.

Mr. MacEachen: As a matter of fact, I did not state that freely held elections would take place. Certainly, it is my view—and this has been urged upon the Portuguese authorities—that the greatest possible opportunity should be afforded the people to select their representatives in a freely conducted election.

[Mr. Murta.]

FISHERIES

UNITED STATES BAN ON CANADIAN SWORDFISH—REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address my question to the Prime Minister since it involves at least four departments, fisheries, environment, industry, trade and commerce, external affairs, and possibly national health and welfare. Since American fishermen are laughing all the way to the banks—the fishing banks and the financial banks—over their country's ban on Canadian caught swordfish, though their own state swordfish markets are big, would the right hon. gentleman cause this whole matter to be looked at again with determination to correct what has become an injustice against Canadian fishermen?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I realize the matter does concern several departments and that it is an important one. I will undertake to seek an answer and advice regarding the question asked by the hon. member.

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THE ARTS

CRITERIA FOR ALLOCATION OF CANADA COUNCIL GRANTS

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State. On Wednesday I asked the minister whether his department has established any criteria to define what is pornography when allocating Canada Council grants for the arts. His answer, as recorded at page 4644 of *Hansard*, was "Of course not". Does the minister not make a distinction between the right of free expression of an artist who is self-supporting and the artist's responsibility when living on the largesse of taxpayers' contributions?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF LAND NEAR CHILLIWACK—REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH RESIDENTS OF AREA

Mr. Alex Patterson (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of National Defence. In view of the rather amazing answer the minister gave my colleague from Victoria the other day, could I ask the minister whether he would advise the House if it is the irrevocable decision of his department to proceed with the acquisition of approximately 700 acres of land in the Columbia valley region of British Columbia for the purpose of extending CFB Chilliwack?

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, we do have options to purchase a little over 400 acres in the Chilliwack area, and we are negotiating the possible purchase of an additional 200 acres.