

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**Mr. Pinard:** Madam Speaker, as the hon. member is well aware, we will have a budget speech Tuesday night. The offer we made the Conservatives and which they refused was to sit till midnight on Monday to debate the constitutional proposal. We made the offer but they refused. Given that refusal we had no other alternative but to take our responsibilities and respect the Canadian public and act as we did.

Madam Speaker, I draw the attention of hon. members across the aisle to the fact that we have had two elections in one year, that there are 30 bills on the order paper, that we must have nine opposition days before December 10, seven of which will be between November 14 and December 10, and six of those being Committees of the Whole House.

We must have six and one half days to debate the budget speech. Yet we must also continue to govern the country. We must also take our responsibilities. That is why, Madam Speaker, we acted as we did in order to give Parliament, through its committee, the opportunity to consider the constitutional proposal while, at the same time, assuming our responsibilities toward the Canadian public which expects a lot more from its elected representatives than purely delaying tactics such as the ones we have seen in the last few days.

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● (1200)

[English]

**FISHERIES**

CANADA-U.S. WEST COAST SALMON TREATY—OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS

**Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni):** Madam Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The minister will be painfully aware of the difficulty Canada is having in getting ratification of the east coast fisheries treaty. Also he will be aware of some of the sacrifices fishermen on the east coast have already been asked to make in getting any approval from the negotiating committees.

This week in Seattle, Washington, the negotiating committees for the United States and Canada met to discuss a treaty which will have a joint management of the west coast salmon industry. Does the minister feel that the treaty on the west coast is important enough to have a parliamentary debate before any Canadian government ratification occurs? Will he guarantee to give some assurance to the House that before any ratification is undertaken by the government we will have a chance to discuss the treaty which may be signed?

**Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Madam Speaker, certainly I recognize the sacrifices made by Canadian fishermen on the east coast. The Secretary of State for External Affairs has made that point very strongly and clearly. As for the possible west coast agreement, I have not

yet been debriefed on the results of the negotiations that took place this week.

**An hon. Member:** What do you mean by “debriefed”?

**Mr. LeBlanc:** I hope to do this over the weekend. I do not think the procedure in Canada is the same as that in the United States. For that reason I do not think I can answer in substance the hon. member's invitation to have a debate of the type which would lead to a vote on ratification or non-ratification. As the hon. member well knows, I favour full discussion of these questions in a parliamentary committee. I am sure we will find a way to air fully the views of members on all sides of the House.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF NEGOTIATION

**Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni):** Madam Speaker, perhaps the minister is aware that one of the difficulties in the Canadian public's mind is that they do not have enough information. They are not aware of the kinds of sacrifices Canadian fishermen have already undertaken.

I should like to direct my supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Recently at a conference on “Approaches to Foreign Policy—Differences and Similarities” the minister made the following statement:

In Canada, parliamentary approval is sought only for some of the very most important treaties, and treaty negotiation and ratification is a matter of executive authority as an element of the royal prerogative.

Also the minister indicated that they were looking at alternatives to the present method of negotiating treaties. Does he feel this treaty is important enough to be dealt with in Parliament? Has he decided on any mechanism by which we can delay our decision in the House or by his government until the United States Senate has given its approval?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, that is a question which has not yet been considered by the government nor in all its implications even by myself, because we are not far enough along the road yet for that decision to be warranted.

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**OFFICIAL REPORT**

DELAY IN TRANSLATION OF YESTERDAY'S ISSUE

**Madam Speaker:** With the permission of the House, I should like to make two brief statements. I want to inform the House that *Hansard* will be available later today; we have had problems with translations. It is not that the translators did not work very hard in order to allow us to have *Hansard* this morning, but because of the circumstances of which all members are aware, the staff was rather thin, some of them had worked for approximately 48 hours in a row, and people were very, very tired. Therefore, there will be a delay in the publication of *Hansard* today, but we hope things will be re-established very rapidly.