

Oral Questions

Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, I should at the outset indicate for the record that the social housing component of CMHC is a national program. The allocation of the 25,000 social housing units is on a proportionate basis in all of the provinces from coast to coast. This is in response to needs on the east coast as well as those on the west.

Second, the MURB provision is a national policy. It is a tax policy of the government which applies everywhere. If it is not by itself sufficient to engender action and response to the points raised by the hon. member, I have no hesitation in saying that some provinces have felt that they can, with their resources, add to those expenditures of the federal government. I would recommend that that be considered by the provincial ministry.

REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH NOVA SCOTIA MINISTER

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Madam Speaker, perhaps I could ask the minister to contact the regional office of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation in Halifax and ask about the status of the social program in Nova Scotia and about how it is proceeding.

In order to help the area to take a positive approach, will the minister meet with the minister responsible for housing in Nova Scotia and with other maritime housing ministers in order to establish some additional programs to resolve the problems in the housing field?

Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, I have a meeting arranged with the minister for Monday.

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FISHERIES

IMPACT OR REGULATIONS ON SPORT FISHING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. It arises out of the recent regulations the minister has announced which impact very heavily on the sports fishing and recreational community in British Columbia, as the minister well knows because of the thousands of letters he has been receiving. The minister initiated these regulations without reference to the sports fish advisory council or to his own ministerial advisory board. He has produced no scientific evidence to justify the measures he has announced.

As he is a man who has a great deal of regard for the concept of fairness and equity, I wonder if the minister might tell this House how many of the Fraser River chinook salmon are caught by the sports fishery of British Columbia, what percentage are caught by the industrial seine fishery, and what percentage are caught by interception by U.S. fishermen in Puget Sound and the San Juan islands area.

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, I do not have in front of me the arithmetic the hon. member requests. I can obviously look and make sure that his office receives a copy. In fact, I was looking at that information in a report which was sent to me last night.

Certainly it was in an effort to be fair to all groups that I felt that conservation measures should affect all groups. There should not be one or two groups which are completely excluded from conservation measures. In fact we have approached United States authorities to explain that the situation regarding the Fraser chinook was very serious and that we were hoping they would also implement measures to accommodate the Canadian interests. They have not rejected this approach. In fact, I thought their reaction was rather positive. I am waiting for confirmation from them.

ECONOMIC EFFECT OF REGULATIONS—REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION

Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta): Madam Speaker, the sports fishermen of British Columbia are particularly annoyed by this rather ridiculous one-fish-per-day rule, which essentially cripples the sports fishing industry, which includes guiding and tackle operations, tackle manufacturers, and all those who benefit from the sports fishery.

Is the minister prepared to announce a 90-day suspension at least of the one-a-day chinook salmon regulation so that he can meet with the sports fishery advisory committee and so that there can be full disclosure of scientific facts with respect to the potential effectiveness of this measure? Before reimplementing these initiatives will the minister announce action against the industrial seine fleet and the American fishery at the same time?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. member would not want to drag a red herring across this problem. The information is available to all interest groups, including the sport fishery advisory groups. I accept that perhaps we did not at the very last minute consult adequately, although discussions on bag limits, etc. have been going on for months and months. In fact, I have had very prolonged discussions with sports fishermen's representatives in the past six months. A meeting was scheduled for yesterday. I have not yet seen a report on this. There will be another meeting with another sports fishing group later this week.

I will repeat what I said ten days ago to the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich: if the sports fishing community can come up with alternatives which are perhaps slightly better adapted to what they identify as their needs, and yet make sure that conservation of the wild chinook stock does take place, then obviously I am open to suggestions.

I do not think a 90-day moratorium is the right approach. There was a suggestion—and I am looking at the possibility—that we might look at a shorter moratorium, but then the onus would be on all users to come up with alternative suggestions.