

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Ray Perrault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I have a short reply to this question. Official figures have not yet been released but indications are that there were approximately 40,000 fewer claimants on benefits at the end of April than in the month previously and a marked reduction in initial claims received.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Later:]

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour. Can he tell the House how much of the 40,000 reduction in those getting unemployment insurance benefits was due to people going back to work and how much was due to the fact that people ran out of unemployment insurance benefits?

Mr. Perrault: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the official figures have not yet been released—

Mr. Hees: Just the political figures.

Mr. Perrault: —but of the encouraging reduction in total of 40,000 fewer active claimants very few of them at that time of the year, could be expected to be off benefits because their benefits had been exhausted. There is an encouraging reduction in the number of initial claims received. Indeed, I know the opposition—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest that this is debate between the parliamentary secretary and the hon. member asking the question.

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FISHERIES**ACCEPTANCE OF CANADIAN POSITION RESPECTING BAN ON TAKING SALMON ON HIGH SEAS**

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry. The minister has stated that the government has made known its views on deep sea salmon fishing at the annual meeting of the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries. Would the minister indicate whether all countries, except Denmark, accept Canada's position on banning the taking of salmon on the high seas?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): Mr. Speaker, we requested a 20 per cent annual reduction in the Danish catch. Four countries finally voted against maintenance of the Danish vessel quota including the United States and the U.S.S.R.

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister tell the House whether Canada's position, as placed before the ICNAF meeting in Halifax, on general conservation of

[Mr. Gibson.]

the Atlantic fisheries resources met with any degree of success?

Mr. Davis: I would say yes, Mr. Speaker. We are certainly hopeful that the next law of the sea conference in 1973 will produce a total ban on all high seas fishing for salmon.

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INDUSTRY**BOOK PUBLISHING—FEDERAL ASSISTANCE TO FIRM OF McCLELLAND AND STEWART**

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State. Last Friday I asked the Prime Minister to give Parliament information on whether the federal government was invited to participate in financial assistance to McClelland and Stewart, the publishing house. The Prime Minister informed us that the Secretary of State brought the matter to the federal cabinet some time ago—

An hon. Member: Pierre Berton is going to buy them out.

Mr. Lewis: —and later said he would prefer that the Secretary of State tell us what he communicated to the provincial government of Ontario. Perhaps the Secretary of State could do that now.

[Translation]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I have informed the Ontario government that the matter was under consideration by the federal cabinet and that no final decision had yet been reached. This is the only information I can give the hon. member today, because I think the decision will be taken only this week.

[English]

Mr. Lewis: Could the Secretary of State inform the House when the invitation from the Ontario government was received, how long the cabinet has been stewing over this relatively simple although very important problem and how soon, before McClelland and Stewart goes underground or is sold to Americans, the federal government may reach a decision?

[Translation]

Mr. Pelletier: Mr. Speaker, I shall be very happy to provide the hon. member with a complete schedule when I have had time to draw it up. It will be difficult, however to define what advising the federal government is, and if this can be done just by a phone call or if a more formal letter must be expected. But I also wish to point out before resuming my seat that the whole problem of Canadian book publishing was examined by the federal government and by my department in particular when we met publishers from across the country as early as January. But I think that the hon. member will not quarrel with me over my statement that a policy cannot be established on so sensitive a matter in a few days.