

Oral Questions

board. I would be glad to report to the hon. member when I have a response.

Mr. Orlikow: When the minister discusses this question with members of the Anti-Inflation Board, would he ask them if they can explain why they turned down this increase to people who are on a relatively low pay scale while teachers in some Ontario communities have had increases of more than 20 per cent approved? Also would he ask members of the Anti-Inflation Board if they could do more than just issue a directive, that is give some explanation of their reasons for making the rulings they make?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I will very carefully discuss with the board the questions of the hon. gentleman.

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HEALTH

POSSIBILITY OF REASSESSMENT OF STANDARDS FOR
MERCURY IN SWORDFISH—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. On Friday, December 19 at page 10193 of *Hansard* the Minister of State (Fisheries) informed the House that he had asked the Health Ministry to reassess and re-evaluate health standards relating to mercury in swordfish.

In view of the importance of re-establishing, if possible, this industry, worth some \$4 million to Nova Scotia alone, while at the same time giving new job opportunities to fishermen who have been refused the renewal of their lobster fishing licences, will the minister give the House a progress report from his department, and has he made any representations to Washington in the hope of re-opening this important market?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, there have been no representations made to Washington, but this is a matter of great significance and obviously of great economic importance to fishermen. However, it is also of significant importance with respect to health. This is a very complex and difficult matter which is actively being studied by my department and fisheries officials, and I hope there will be a resolution of this question reasonably soon.

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TRADE

REQUEST FOR NEW MARKETS FOR SWORDFISH—GOVERNMENT
ACTION

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Since swordfish are consumed in some states of the United States and in Japan, South Africa, Italy and Latin American countries without apparent damage to health, has the minister made any attempt to open up new markets for swordfish in the countries I have mentioned, and if not, will he endeavour to do so?

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that the issue certainly has not come to my attention, and I have not done anything along the lines suggested by the hon. member. However, I will be glad to look into this matter to see what we may be able to do.

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HEALTH

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF REDUCTION IN BUDGET
FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Mr. Bill Clarke (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the remarks made by the Prime Minister yesterday at the University of British Columbia, where he was accompanied by most of the missing members of the cabinet and where he dedicated the TRIUMF project, the \$36 million joint universities meson facility which contains the largest and most complex cyclotron ever built, wherein the Prime Minister indicated that the cabinet had decided to extend money because they were, and I quote, "mindful of the potential in meson research of international significance," will the minister seek reconsideration of the announced freeze of medical research budgets for next year so that much needed medical research at the University of British Columbia and other medical schools, which also have international significance, will not need to be curtailed, to the lasting detriment of existing research establishments?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the budget restrictions have already been announced by the President of the Treasury Board. It is obvious that if the President of the Treasury Board ever get hold of additional monies, I am sure he would consider with much sympathy any endeavour to increase the grants offered for research. But I have not yet been advised that such additional resources were available.

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[English]

TARIFFS

REASON FOR CHANGE IN ITEM RELATING TO RELIGIOUS
BOOKS

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue. I wonder if the minister could give the House an explanation of why tariff item 17200-1 was changed so that now the King James Version of the Bible as well as the Concordance to the Septuagint and books of that nature, which are clearly religious books, are now dutiable?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I wonder if that information ought not to be sought in some other way.