

Oral Questions

generous than for the establishment of any other national park in Canada.

In the last couple of days or so, the Government of British Columbia has had some second thoughts about the issue and has wanted to renegotiate certain aspects of it. We believe the deal stands, that it is generous, and we would hope that the Government of British Columbia would reconsider and follow through with its commitment as it indicated it would do when it signed the Memorandum of Understanding.

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● (1500)

[Translation]

MINORITIES**LINGUISTIC RIGHTS OF ALBERTAN FRANCOPHONES—REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT AID**

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

The *Association franco-albertaine* has taken a very reasonable position on the recognition of language rights of Francophones in Alberta and would like to see the Government of Alberta implement the vested rights recognized by the Supreme Court not long ago, arising from Section 110 of the Northwest Territories Act.

I wonder whether the Prime Minister would make a commitment in the House today to initiate action that is positive and generous. Will he offer to help the Government of Alberta implement an open and active policy that will allow Alberta's Francophone minority to survive?

[English]

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, in response to the Hon. Member I would like to reiterate simply the fact that the federal Government has been on record, through the Prime Minister and myself, with respect to extending to the Province of Alberta assistance in a tangible manner concerning the question of minority rights in that province.

As the Hon. Member will know, the specific question with respect to minority rights in Alberta is a matter that has still to come before the Supreme Court of Canada. Even in advance of any adjudication of this matter by the Supreme Court of Canada, we have indicated our interest and, indeed, our willingness to give leadership in this area.

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I heard on Friday that the Government will introduce legislation this week, without waiting for the Supreme Court to decide. I am sure that the Government is aware of the editorial in the *Calgary Herald* in which it stated that it is: "fatuous for

the Tories to discuss publicly the prospect of Alberta becoming totally bilingual. No one is asking for that, not even the Francophones". The editorial goes on to support the Bill. It states that Mr. Getty should become very much more open, public, and state openly what he intends to do.

In the spirit of the Meech Lake Accord in which the role of the provinces and the Government is to support minority groups, will the Minister this time, rather than doing the Saskatchewan bit, come ahead and now openly tell Albertans and Canadians that the federal Government will be pro-active, offering the services now, today, and not wait until after the legislation is passed?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Member's question. I tried to explain in my first response that, indeed, we have already commenced our discussions with the Province of Alberta.

My colleague, the Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations, has been in communication and has visited officials and Ministers in the Province of Alberta with respect to the best way in which the federal Government can provide assistance to obtain equity and justice for the minorities in the Province of Alberta.

Indeed, we are giving the matter leadership. We intend to work at that, even before there is any judicial pronouncement, or in spite of the fact that there may be a judicial pronouncement by the Supreme Court of Canada.

Mr. Speaker: This will be the last question, a single question by the Hon. Member for Skeena.

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FISHERIES**BRITISH COLUMBIA SALMON FISHERY—PATROL ENFORCEMENT AND CONSERVATION**

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. Is the Minister aware that the budget cuts that he is forcing upon the permanent patrol vessel fleet and the seasonal patrol group in British Columbia mean that food, sport, and commercial fishing for salmon along large stretches of the B.C. coast will be closed this year and, as well, many runs will neither be protected from creek robbing nor counted for conservation purposes this year?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Hon. Member that we are not cutting our funds and resources devoted to enforcement or necessary scientific research. These are commitments that I have made. I have given them in the whole context of reorganization of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans over the past two years. I intend to adhere to those commitments.