

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Benson: I very much doubt that the reimposition of a ceiling would have the effect of bringing down interest rates in Canada. That would simply make it more difficult for the ordinary person, such as my hon. friend and myself, to borrow. I have discussed the problem of interest rates which is a world wide problem and closely related to interest rates in the United States. The fact is that the way interest rates can be brought under control in the long run, I believe, is to control the rate of inflation in western countries.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Finance consider conferring with the Minister of Finance in Australia to find out how that government finds it possible to make mortgage money available at 5 per cent?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has made a submission and can assume it will be considered by the Minister of Finance.

WATER RESOURCES

PLACENTIA BAY, NFLD.—ATTENDANCE OF MINISTER AT MEETING TO DISCUSS POLLUTION

Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry. Would the minister say whether he received an invitation from the fishermen of Placentia Bay to attend an emergency meeting tomorrow at St. John's, and if so is it his intention to attend. These are the fishermen who are affected by the pollution.

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): Mr. Speaker, I am replying to the fishermen to the effect that I will be down there shortly. However, I shall not be able to be there tomorrow.

Mr. Carter: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. On the assumption that some officials from the minister's department will be attending, would the minister indicate whether specific directions have been given these officials to help alleviate the unrest and answer the grievances of the fishermen in the area.

Mr. Davis: These officials have been told under what conditions the money will be made available to the fishermen, the progress we are making in respect of pollution in that area and also, hopefully, that there will be a

reduction of the area closed so that the fishermen will be able to commence fishing in some parts of Placentia Bay.

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Due to the fact that the emergency meeting will number some 700 or 800 persons, can the minister say whether his officials have been advised what amendments will be made to the present arrangement which is the cause of the unrest.

Mr. Davis: The present arrangement is to bring the income of the fishermen up to the normal level. I thought that would be enough to cool the fishermen off a bit.

Mr. Carter: Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware of the dissatisfaction and unrest expressed by fishermen of this area with regard to the treatment accorded them by the officials of the Department of Fisheries.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is reiterating the same question.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

ZONING PROCEDURE IN TORONTO

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Postmaster General. Is it the intention of the Post Office to discontinue the postal zoning system in Toronto?

Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Postmaster General and Minister of Communications): Not at all. We have introduced the zoning system in Toronto and some other cities. We are suspending it in other areas until such time as we have studied very carefully the recommendation of a task force concerning the introduction of a national coding system. If we do introduce such a national coding system it will incorporate the existing zones.

OPERATION OF OFFICES ON SATURDAYS

Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, is the Postmaster General giving consideration to keeping the main areas of post offices open on Saturdays?

Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Postmaster General and Minister of Communications): We are giving some consideration to this. We are considering really either the increase or reduction of services presently being offered. We are examining both the upper and lower limits.