

question today, but it seems that my hon. colleague has a number of items to announce, so I would ask him to proceed.

• (1515)

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a few offerings for my hon. colleagues, just before the holidays.

[English]

First of all, in my capacity as Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, I want to join in the congratulations and best wishes to Mr. Fréchet, Mr. Robitaille and Mr. Renaud.

This afternoon we will continue consideration of third reading stage of Bill C-53. I believe there is an understanding that we will vote on this today. However, there will be an interruption at around 4.30 or 5 p.m. when the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod will summon the House to the other place for a royal assent ceremony. I understand that will be the last formal activity in Parliament by His Excellency the current Governor General before he leaves office early in the new year.

Also, I understand there is some considerable desire on both sides of the House to adjourn for the winter adjournment provided for in Standing Order 28 after completing Bill C-53 and the royal assent.

I will announce the business for the day when we return during the week before that date, hopefully not in this House but directly to my hon. colleagues. I want to say that tentatively I am looking at Bill C-44 and Bill C-62 as the selections likely to be called.

Finally, I would like to extend to the other House leaders and all members of this House my non-partisan best wishes for the holidays and the new year.

**The Speaker:** My colleagues, if indeed we do break today, I invite all of you to join me for a reception in my quarters before you leave today.

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## PRIVILEGE

### ORDER PAPER QUESTIONS

**Mr. John Cummins (Delta, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, as I informed you and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans earlier today, I rise on a question of privilege in relation to a discrepancy in the supplemental answer given today to Order Paper Question No. 82. The answer is again inaccurate and misleading. It misrepresents the facts and is contradicted by DFO enforcement documents which I have received under access to information.

## Privilege

I was prepared to meet with the deputy House leader and the minister as per your instructions to discuss a satisfactory answer to Question No. 82. I sought such a meeting. A meeting never occurred and instead, the minister tabled a supplemental answer this morning.

The question asked the effect the late signing of the aboriginal fisheries agreement had on enforcement of fisheries agreements and fisheries regulations in 1994. The minister's answer does not respond to the effect on enforcement.

**The Speaker:** Is this new information the member is giving the House, or is it a repetition of the information he put before the House previously? Can the hon. member clarify that?

**Mr. Cummins:** Mr. Speaker, the information is new. What I am doing is responding to the supplemental answer to Question No. 82 which was tabled this morning.

The minister's supplemental answer to Question No. 82 which I refer to does not respond to the effect on enforcement. The departmental documents received under access to information deal specifically with the effect on enforcement.

The minister's supplemental answer deals with the management of the aboriginal fishing strategy, not the effect on enforcement of fisheries regulations, that is, the Fisheries Act. Now is not the time to debate the aboriginal fishing strategy.

The answer implies that aboriginal guardians were on duty as usual and that licences were given out as required under the regulations. That is simply not true. Virtual chaos reigned on the west coast. Fisheries documents prove it.

The issue before this House is whether the minister's answer misleads this House and prevents me as a member from carrying out my duties.

Let me read a few short sections from the August fisheries enforcement document on early Stuart migration which clearly demonstrates that the minister's supplemental answer is inaccurate. In Steveston it was reported that "the ability to properly manage the Fraser River aboriginal fishery has been seriously compromised". It also states: "The late signing of the aboriginal agreements has also resulted in difficulties in respect to proper management of the fishery, and in many cases bands have not been able to abide by the terms of the agreement".

• (1520)

In Fraser Valley East and Fraser Valley West the report states that the lateness in the signing of the 1994 aboriginal fishery agreement has resulted in the breakdown of effective management in the native fishery on the Fraser River. DFO officers were unable to perform their duties effectively because updated licensing data was not available, therefore proper gear and licence checks could not be done. Mandatory landing sites were not operational until late July. Arrangements were not made by