

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I answered yesterday that it is likely that such a bill would not be put in with gun controls.

Mr. Woolliams: This is the second time the minister has used the word "unlikely", Mr. Speaker. Will the minister without equivocation answer yes or no to this very simple question instead of acting like a wet nurse?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, when a final decision is made it will be made known to the House. The reason no final decision has been made as yet is that we are still receiving representations on both sides of the question, not only from this party but from members of his party as well.

An hon. Member: That is an unequivocal "maybe".

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FISHERIES

PROTECTION OF SEAL HUNT—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, as a result of the scientific data acquired by the Department of Fisheries in respect of the threat to the seal hunt, will the minister indicate what action he is taking to develop a method of protecting this seal hunt in the future?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of State (Fisheries)): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. member for his courtesy in giving me notice, and also to take this first opportunity of congratulating him on becoming his party's fisheries critic.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LeBlanc (Westmorland-Kent): I can confirm that the scientific assessment of seal stocks is pessimistic. However, I have asked that this be reviewed and reviewed thoroughly. I have had a meeting with the industry, and met yesterday with the Minister of Fisheries for Newfoundland, and also a delegation from the government of Quebec. These are the two provinces most affected. I have asked that our evidence be double checked and triple checked before a decision is made which would affect the fishermen, and I will keep the hon. member informed as we go along.

Mr. Marshall: Mr. Speaker, in view of the further discussions the minister is going to have with Norway and Denmark in this regard, will he take into consideration the importance of the seal fishery and the quotas to landsmen who depend on the seal fishers to supplement their meagre income? Will he assure the House that this will be taken into consideration?

Mr. LeBlanc (Westmorland-Kent): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for reminding me that we do have complicated international negotiations with Norway and Denmark. These meetings will take place in mid-November. As for tilting the program in favour of the landsmen,

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the hon. member has understood my instincts. I agree with him.

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FINANCE

PARTICIPATION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF YUKON AND NORTHWEST TERRITORIES IN FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE OF FINANCE MINISTERS

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: Welcome back.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I am very sorry to disappoint my colleagues opposite, but I assure them I am not announcing my intention to run for leadership.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: My question is directed to the Minister of Finance but it could just as well be directed to the Solicitor General as it refers to the upcoming conference of Attorneys General. Keeping in mind the conference between the provincial Ministers of Finance and the federal government in respect of the so-called attack on inflation, I am wondering how the minister intends to involve the Canadian citizens in the Yukon and Northwest Territories? Have the elected representatives of the people in those territories, through their legislative bodies, been invited to participate in this conference, or is it the intention of the government to impose whatever conclusions or decisions they reach on the people above the 60th parallel from on high here in Ottawa?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am under the impression that there are some elected representatives in this House from that area north of 60. Of course, the interests of those people are represented in this parliament through its jurisdiction over the Yukon and Northwest Territories. I would be glad to confirm with the federal-provincial relations secretariat what arrangements customarily have been made in this regard. My recollection is that in the past there have not, at these meetings of Ministers of Finance, been separate representatives, but I would be glad to investigate the question.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister to consult with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in this respect and to urge upon him the likelihood of gaining a good deal more co-operation in the implementation of his program in the Yukon and Northwest Territories if he would involve the people through the local elected representatives of their legislative bodies, as he is doing with the provinces.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comment.