

Oral Questions

Affairs. As the minister is aware, a Canadian citizen, Sidney Jaffe, was kidnapped forcibly and against his will by American bounty hunters in Toronto last September 23 and taken to Florida for prosecution. This kidnapping was a gross violation of Canadian law. It was a violation of our Criminal Code. I would like to ask the minister what steps have been taken by the Canadian government to see that these bounty hunters are extradited to face charges in our country, and what steps he has taken on the reported complicity of American border officials in this kidnapping. What is he doing to remedy this outrageous affront to Canadian sovereignty?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, we have made very strong representations to the United States about this case. We have asked for the extradition of the bounty hunters, and the matter is under consideration by the United States state department.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Madam Speaker, it appears to me that the government is not giving this priority attention. If the government is not really interested in this matter, perhaps it could arrange to hire these bounty hunters to find Mr. John C. Doyle, Hal Banks and other Liberal friends.

DELAYED RESPONSE BY UNITED STATES AUTHORITIES

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): In 1974, Ronald Anderson was arrested by American officials on Canadian soil and freed within six days. I want to ask the minister what has happened to Canadian-United States relationships that it now takes something in excess of six months before we get any response, let alone any action in this particular matter.

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, my hon. friend knows that in a case of this kind, which involves state authorities and the courts, there is no easy way by which a strong representation made by this government—one repeated recently on a visit by our ambassador in Washington to the United States deputy attorney general—can automatically be acted upon by the state and judicial authorities in question. We have made very strong representations, as we are able to do, to the United States federal Secretary of State, and we believe that the United States government will respond to our request.

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HEALTH

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NATIVE HEALTH

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. The minister will be aware that because of the desperate health conditions amongst native people discovered by our Special Committee on the Disabled and Handicapped, the committee issued a special follow-up report which strongly endorsed the upcoming national conference on native health. In view of the fact that plans for this all-important conference

have been scuttled by the minister's department, and because of the urgency of the matter, will the hon. lady give her assurance that the conference will be held at an early date?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Yes, of course, Madam Speaker. I have not heard anyone say that plans for the conference on health to be held by Canadian Indians have been scrapped. I do not know where the hon. member got his information. As far as I know, native leaders are now making arrangements and will be submitting concrete proposals, which I shall support wholeheartedly.

[English]

REQUEST THAT MINISTER MEET INDIAN REPRESENTATIVES

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Madam Speaker, the information came from the National Indian Brotherhood, and representatives of that organization have been endeavouring to have an audience with the minister for several months, without success. Will she now take the opportunity to meet with them at the earliest opportunity with a view to putting plans for the native health conference back on the rails?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): I quite understand that the hon. member wants to give me all the help he can in promoting projects to help Indians suffering from various physical handicaps. However, I am not very happy with the manner he has chosen to raise the subject. When native groups want to see me, they call my office and I see them regularly. This has always worked and it will continue to be my policy.

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[English]

DISASTERS

COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO SINKING OF "OCEAN RANGER"

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. After the intervention of Archbishop Penney at the ecumenical service for the crew of the *Ocean Ranger*, the Newfoundland provincial government announced it was willing to participate in a joint commission to investigate the accident. If the federal government goes ahead with the joint commission, can the minister tell us whether the federal government will allow labour participation on that commission?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I answered a similar question put by the hon. member for St. John's West a few minutes ago. The government will examine the situation and announce a decision in the next few days.