

think the minister is aware that Vancouver Island is the largest market in western Canada not presently served by natural gas. On Monday, in Vancouver, the minister refused to support British Columbia's proposal to build a natural gas pipeline to Vancouver Island. My question is, why?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I had an excellent meeting with my colleague, the minister of energy for British Columbia, and I do not know where my colleague got the information that I was not supporting the notion or the principle of a pipeline to Vancouver Island.

● (1500)

On the contrary, I told CBC radio and the press which interviewed us at the end of the meeting that I thought it was an excellent initiative on the part of the British Columbia government and one which we welcomed very much. We will follow the developments in this regard with great interest and my colleague, the minister of energy for British Columbia, and I are due to meet again and discuss these issues at a later stage.

Mr. Waddell: Madam Speaker, according to press reports the minister has said that he could not afford, right now—with the \$14 billion deficit—to put any money into this project.

Is the minister aware that such a project, while costing about \$200 million, would replace 80 million to 100 million barrels of oil over a 20-year period, which would amount to something like \$450 million to \$500 million? If the minister can agree with those figures, is he then prepared to take another look at this matter and to commit himself, as he said a moment ago, to some federal support for this project?

Mr. Lalonde: Madam Speaker, I would have thought that with the experience the hon. member has had in this House as a parliamentarian, he would not believe everything he reads in the press.

Mr. Broadbent: It is more reliable than the minister.

Mr. Lalonde: For instance, it is reported that I did not attend the opening of a windmill experiment near Victoria, when in fact I was there with my colleague, the president of B.C. Hydro and, I think, four networks. I suggest to the hon. member that he check the press reports very carefully.

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THE ADMINISTRATION

RECOGNITION OF CANADIAN ETHNIC ORIGINS

Mr. John Kushner (Calgary East): “Ya Paunyi dooju krausno dynak-kooyou stcho dalishtee mnie nahodu skazaty paro sleuu.”

Madam Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the President of the Privy Council. This is the fourth level of government I have served on in my many years as an elected representative of the people. With regard to the federal level of

Privilege—Mr. Sargeant

government, I am very disappointed and frustrated with the present structure and effectiveness of parliamentary committees.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Resign.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. It being very close to the end of the question period, I ask that the hon. member put his question very rapidly.

Mr. Kushner: Approximately two years ago a procedural organization committee was struck to look into the situation. As a result, two reports were tabled. Is the President of the Privy Council reviewing the reports with the intention of making recommendations to Parliament for much needed change?

[Translation]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, the frustrations which the hon. member has expressed could also stem from his feeling that the speeches in the House are too long, that the House should sit in the morning and not at night, and that perhaps he should like to spend more time in his own constituency and deal with his constituents' difficulties. I am pleased by his interest in the changes to be made to our Standing Orders, and I shall give serious consideration to any idea he may care to submit possibly to streamline Parliament and make it more human and efficient.

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[English]

PRIVILEGE

MR. SARGEANT—TEST OF TOXIC CHEMICALS IN MANITOBA

Mr. Terry Sargeant (Selkirk-Interlake): Madam Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege arising from information provided by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence (Mrs. Appolloni) in response to questions by myself and the hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Epp) concerning chemical and biological warfare testing in Canada. The parliamentary secretary, in response to questions on this issue over the last two days, has misled the House; whether it was inadvertent or not, I am unable to say.

In response to my first question on this matter on Monday, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence replied, as reported at page 930 of *Hansard*:

—I think it is important to point out that the department feels very strongly that if such an experiment did, in fact, take place, it was not harmful to human life.

Yesterday, in response to the hon. member for Provencher, the parliamentary secretary said, as reported at page 1005 of *Hansard*:

The report that we have so far... is that, in effect, this substance was not harmful to human life.