

Adjournment Debate

minutes of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence of June 26, 1966.

It is a matter of record that Canadian interest in the testing of chemical defoliants was purely in finding a better product for bush control at CFB Gagetown. This fact is very clear in the report of the Canadian liaison officer which the hon. member opposite requested and received from the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Lamontagne).

I would like to emphasize that the Department of National Defence will not distribute documents that belong to another government; however, when the hon. member opposite asked for the Canadian document relating to the Gagetown test, he promptly received a copy and was also given a tour and a briefing at base Gagetown when he asked for one.

Having been given the facts, it was either irresponsible or simply ignorant of NDP members opposite to link herbicides with chemical warfare, as they have repeatedly tried to do. Let me also say that it may be an indication of their intellectual integrity that, in question period earlier today, they quoted only one sentence from the document the minister made available to them, and it was quoted out of context as well.

Let me suggest that the most significant health hazard in this matter may well be the anxiety created by the irresponsible allegations and innuendos of NDP members. I believe

their interest in keeping this matter alive should be seen for what it is—a convenient political expedient to make headlines.

The department has acted very responsibly in this matter, as it does in any other matter. All information on the spray trials has been made available to the federal Department of National Health and Welfare and to New Brunswick health authorities. The department will co-operate fully in any further study which relevant authorities may want to undertake in the matter. In the meantime, the three Canadian personnel who were directly involved in the trials have been medically examined by competent authorities and given a clean bill of health.

In conclusion, what we have asked ourselves and what the members opposite should also ask themselves is just how relevant the matter of some very limited brush control spraying done 15 years ago is when we all know that the same compounds have been used and are still in use extensively by agriculture and industry in many places. If their concern is about the essence of the matter, namely, the safe use of chemical products not only for agricultural but for all purposes, they should state their case clearly and not make false allegations and innuendos.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

At 10.30 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.