

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, I have just received a transcript of the statement by the minister. I apologize, but I have not had time to have consultations with the minister. The way I read the statement, he is using—as did the hon. member—the first person plural, “we”. It is not clear to me whether he is talking about Canada or whether he is talking about the west in general. I rather think the latter, because he is talking of nuclear deterrents. The House knows—we all know—that Canada does not have any nuclear deterrents and that we have always opposed them.

## USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY CANADIAN FORCES IN NATO

**Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria):** Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister got to the point right at the end: we have always opposed them and the Prime Minister has always opposed them. He has opposed countries such as France arming itself with a neutron weapon. After the display yesterday, I can well understand why the Prime Minister feels he needs a special adviser in National Defence other than the Minister of National Defence.

Perhaps I could ask the minister my supplementary question. If the minister succeeds in persuading his NATO colleagues to develop nuclear weapons of a sophisticated nature, including the neutron bomb, is it the minister's intention that the Canadian forces in Europe will be equipped with them, or does he wish us to act like Pontius Pilate, keeping our hands clean but encouraging our allies to do otherwise?

**Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence):** Madam Speaker, it is true; this conversation occurred during the “Question Period” discussion on television. Obviously, I was talking about the alliance and about the west, because the question was about what kind of deterrent would be credible if by chance we wanted to promote a peaceful means for disarmament and limitation of arms.

I said at the time that the only way we could have a very efficient deterrent would be to have sophisticated weapons by which we could prove to the Russians that we are serious when we want to talk about peace and disarmament, and that we will talk peace and disarmament from strength, not from weakness.

● (1450)

## POLICY ON NATO POSSESSING NEUTRON BOMB

**Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary is to the Prime Minister and it follows on the comments made by the Minister of National Defence.

It seems to me that the Minister of National Defence, in his answer, once again reiterated his personal support for such sophisticated nuclear weapons as the neutron bomb. I would like the Prime Minister to state very clearly that there is no interest on the part of the government to support in any way the NATO alliance achieving the neutron bomb.

The Prime Minister stated on June 27, in Sweden, in response to a question by a Canadian journalist, that he would vigorously protest to France the possibility of that country using a neutron bomb. It is my understanding that no such protest has gone forward from the Government of Canada. Given the statements of the Minister of National Defence, would the Prime Minister tell the House whether or not he has now gone back on that commitment; or, if he intends to send that protest, when will it be done?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member refers to a statement I made in answer to a question while I was in Sweden. The answer was conditional upon the question being justified in fact. I said if, in fact, France has tested a neutron bomb, we would protest.

**Miss MacDonald:** It has.

**Mr. Trudeau:** The hon. lady says that we have not protested. I say, in fact, we have no evidence that France has tested a neutron bomb. The statement by the President of France is to the effect that they now have the wherewithal or the know-how to proceed to another stage where they could build a bomb and test it. My information is that France has not tested such a bomb.

**Miss MacDonald:** Madam Speaker, I go back to the speech made by the Prime Minister to the special session on disarmament, of the United Nations, in which he very strongly endorsed the decision of the President of the United States not to proceed with a neutron bomb. At that point the United States had not tested such a bomb either.

Because of the Prime Minister's equivocation on this question at the moment, will he tell the House whether or not he will undertake to protest to France the statement made by the President of France, that they have the capability and that they might proceed in that matter? Would he protest to the government of France and ask that they not proceed?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Madam Speaker, in the speech which I made at the United Nations, to which the hon. member has referred, I advocated in these matters of research and development the strategy of suffocation. That is still the policy of this government. We are hopeful that all the major powers will reach some form of agreement, perhaps in the international forum, whereby all of them will cease and desist from developing new techniques of nuclear devices. That is our position.

I have not protested research in the laboratories of France, the United States or the Soviet Union about various studies and aspects at which they are looking. However, it is the policy of the government that, hopefully, we will use the international forum to have these countries cease this type of, not experimentation because there has been no experimentation yet, but of developing new and more sophisticated weapons. That has been our policy. But it has not been the policy of our government nor, I believe, of the Conservative government, to protest what might or might not be in progress at the research