

Oral Questions

Ms. Jewett: Perhaps the Minister does not realize that the resolution only indicated that the superpowers examine urgently, not immediately implement.

CANADIAN POSITION ON RESOLUTION

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, since we do not seem to be taking a position which favours such an examination, may I ask the Minister why we would not at least support the resolution that has support from both the East and West, Romania and Greece, which proposes that the superpowers at least agree on a provisional basis that no medium-range missiles are to be deployed, and that the numbers of existing ones are to be reduced while negotiations are continued?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the reason we could not support that particular resolution is that it is a direct assault on the two-track decision which was taken by NATO. The resolution calls for the cessation of deployment, or non-deployment, and the continuation of negotiations. We have taken the view within NATO that deployment would take place—and that was confirmed at the recent NATO meeting—and would only be interrupted or terminated if concrete results were attained in the negotiations. In brief, the reason we could not support that resolution is because it would run counter to the two-track decision which was adopted in 1979, and which is still a very important cornerstone of NATO policy.

Ms. Jewett: The Minister has just abandoned the Prime Minister's third rail; that is what he has done. He has returned to something that was done four years or five years ago. Where is the third rail? Where is the political will? The Minister shows none.

SUPREME COURT APPEAL IN CRUISE MISSILE TESTING CASE

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, my final supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Justice. Will he exert some political will in light of the decision of the Supreme Court to hear arguments for an appeal on Cruise missile testing? It is a very important appeal, and the Minister agrees himself, on Cruise missile testing. Would he seriously consider adding to those other groups concerned about other parts of the Charter, for example language rights, his support in helping to fund this very vital and important appeal, an appeal which he has already admitted is vital, and for which the Government has funds available, to give it some assistance?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice): Madam Speaker, the Government has no funds available under any existing policy. I think it would not be in the public interest to vary the policies so that we would be supporting appeals under the Charter on a broader basis. This could encourage the bringing in of all kinds of appeals which might make the work

of the courts more difficult. Of course it could prove to be a very expensive proposition in the long run for the Government. Because of the number of Canadians who have confidence in the position which my hon. friend put forward, many of them will be prepared to see to it that this appeal is adequately funded.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

LEAD CONTENT IN GASOLINE—ANNOUNCEMENT OF REDUCTION

Mr. Robert Daudlin (Essex-Kent): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. The Minister will know that there is a growing awareness and a concern in the public with respect to the effect of chemical substances not only on the environment but particularly on the health of individuals. I am referring in particular to the effects of lead in gasoline. The Minister will know as well that his predecessor indicated that the Government was prepared to do something in this regard. Could the Minister of the Environment indicate whether the Government is yet prepared to make an announcement with respect to the content of lead in gasoline?

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of the Environment): Madam Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his interest in this health matter. I advise him and the House that, after extensive discussion with public interest groups, union and industry representatives and colleagues, as initiated by my predecessor, I am pleased to see the completion of the work which he began. I considered all options, including a total ban on lead in gasoline, but because of the potential economic effects of such a drastic measure I am ready to announce today the decision to reduce lead in gasoline to .29 grams per litre by 1987. Lead emissions from automobiles will be reduced by over 60 per cent.

Mr. Crosbie: Get the lead out, Charlie.

Mr. Nielsen: Tell us the name of the author.

Mr. Caccia: I know Hon. Members are very interested in this issue and that they would also like to know that I will announce the creation of an advisory committee to look into the over-all question of lead in gasoline.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Halliday: I have a supplementary question for the Minister.

Madam Speaker: The Hon. Member for York-Peel.