

Oral Questions

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I can only say that following the gasing incident, there was a suspension of a penitentiary employee. That employee has now appealed the suspension. There will be a hearing shortly.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Can the Solicitor General tell the House whether any of the guards involved in the November 3 incident were involved in the 1971 Millhaven riots?

Mr. Allmand: I will have to check that, Mr. Speaker, and report to the hon. member.

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NATIONAL REVENUE**ALLEGED RESTRICTIONS ON OPERATIONS OF FIELD AUDIT OFFICERS—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George—Peace River): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of National Revenue. It is supplementary to the one I asked yesterday. The minister has notice of the question. Now that his army of auditors in British Columbia have been stripped of their armour, what are these people doing in the regional offices? Is it now time for me to inform my constituents that the Income Tax Act is voluntary in the same way that the anti-inflation program will be?

Hon. Jack Cullen (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I compliment the hon. member on the beautiful way he puts his questions. Because of the notice given, I checked into the information that went to the officers to determine if what in fact the hon. member is implying is true. The last thing I want to do is strip them of anything.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**DATE OF SIGNING AGREEMENT WITH BRITISH COLUMBIA**

Mr. G. H. Whittaker (Okanagan Boundary): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. In August the minister told officials in the Okanagan that she was going to sign the implementation agreement within two weeks. In the three answers she has given in this House starting one month ago, she said she would sign it "shortly", "soon" and "in due time". This agreement is between the province of British Columbia and the federal government. Will the minister now tell the House the real reason why she is not signing this implementation agreement?

Hon. Jeanne Sauv  (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I will be signing the agreement as soon as I am able to determine from the province of British Columbia the period over which the money called for in the agreement will be spent. We are now in the process of doing that. As soon as this is completed, the agreement will be signed. We are most anxious to sign the agreement in order that the water basins of the Okanagan Valley can be properly managed.

[Mr. Hnatyshyn.]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**AGREEMENT BETWEEN FRANCE AND UNITED STATES ON EXCHANGE RATES—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. A couple of days ago I asked a question about the accord arrived at between the Republic of France and the United States in connection with that part of the meeting which dealt with one of the major causes of inflation, namely the fluctuating rates for exchange that sometimes bear a direct relationship to organized rates. The answer given at that time was that the government of Canada had not received this agreement, although the President of the United States said the agreement was forwarded to 18 countries directly or indirectly affected. Has the government received any representation from the United States or the Republic of France in connection with that accord which should be receiving consideration to meet in part the problem of inflation?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I shall take notice of this serious question. I will find out whether, in fact, we have received any messages from either of these governments.

REASON FOR DELAY BY FRANCE IN ACCEPTING CREDENTIALS OF CANADIAN AMBASSADOR

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I have a question arising out of the question asked by the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe in respect of the Ambassador to France for Canada. Why has there been this delay in the acceptance of his credentials in Paris? The minister said it did not have anything to do with a depreciation of the relations between Canada and France. There must be some reason why Mr. Pelletier is cooling his heels when matters as important as the one to which I have referred should be receiving consideration.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I understand the reason is that the president has a very long list of ambassadors who have not yet presented their credentials. I should like to say, through you, Mr. Speaker, to all members that once again I resent the effort being made by the opposition to create a rift between Canada and France.

● (1150)

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, the annoyance displayed by the usually equable gentleman indicates what actually is taking place is that France is fed up with the kind of treatment Canada is giving it.

Mr. Peters: It is fed up with the kind of ambassadors we send, too.