

*Oral Questions***HEALTH**

USE OF DEPO-PROVERA FOR CONTRACEPTIVE PURPOSES

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. I understand from his officials that the report of the Special Advisory Committee on Depo-Provera has been in the Minister's Department for several months and that it approves use of this drug for contraceptive purposes. Has the Minister had an opportunity to read the report and will he delay making any decision until he meets with the coalition of 62 women's groups who have not been heard and are very concerned about the side effects of this drug?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member says that this issue has been in my Department for several months. Of course that is correct. That is where the assessment of all drugs for notice of compliance takes place. I have had no recommendation from them yet.

● (1450)

REQUEST THAT REPORT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO CONCERNED WOMEN

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I very much hope that the Minister will read this report, or bring it forward very quickly. When the Minister receives this information will he make it available to the coalition on Depo-Provera so that women who are very, very concerned about their own health with regard to this drug will have this essential information? Will the Minister also meet with them since they were deprived of any chance to meet with the task force when it went across Canada?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, again the Hon. Member's points are not correct. What she wants this Minister to do is to interfere in the regulatory process. I have met with various groups regarding Depo-Provera and D.E.S. There were also committees then established even beyond the regular process for a notice of compliance so that information could be brought forward as well.

However, the Hon. Member will have to decide once and for all whether she wants to have interference at the political level every time a request is made for a notice of compliance, or whether she wants this Minister to allow officials and the legislation to work, as he will continue to do, and when they have done their work I will get a recommendation and then a decision will be made.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

SCHEDULED RESTART OF NUCLEAR REACTOR IN HANFORD, WASHINGTON

Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. As the Minister is aware, the 23-year-old nuclear reactor in Hanford, Washington, near the Canada-U.S. border, is scheduled for restart this summer following a six-month shutdown for safety enhancement purposes. In light of the concerns being expressed by Canadians about the safety of this aging reactor, and a recent U.S. Senate committee recommendation that the reactor be restarted only during a national security crisis, will the Minister tell the House what actions are being taken by the Government of Canada to ensure that Canadians living near Hanford are not threatened in any way by the future operation of this reactor?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question. I know of his deep interest, and that of other Hon. Members in the House, in the Hanford reactor. We have made representations to the United States. We have received guarantees that the reactor will not be restarted until safety modifications have been concluded. I also expect there will be an undertaking with regard to environmental impact assessments before any restart.

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FILM INDUSTRY

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. In February the Minister of Communications announced her new policy to promote the Canadian film distribution industry. Last week she reaffirmed that American pressure would not intimidate her to abandon that policy. On Friday the Minister for International Trade confirmed that the legislation would be introduced.

Is the Prime Minister now backing away from the commitments his Ministers have made to the Canadian film distribution industry? Is he bearing down or bearing under or collapsing under American pressure? Is he being intimidated by the Hollywood producers? If not, why is a Canadian film policy not in this House as legislation now?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the question was that the Prime Minister reportedly has killed legislation that would et cetera—that story is false.