

Oral Questions

AGRICULTURE

AMOUNT OF LAND IRRIGATED FOLLOWING
CONSTRUCTION OF SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN DAM—
ALLEGED FAILURE OF PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT TO
LIVE UP TO AGREEMENT

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Minister of the Environment a question in connection with the South Saskatchewan River irrigation situation where, as a result of the action taken by the government of Saskatchewan, the expected irrigation of 200,000 acres has been restricted to 15,000 acres. Has he communicated with the government of Saskatchewan to point out what a gross betrayal of the rights of the people of Saskatchewan this is as the result of action of that government?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of the Environment): Not yet, Mr. Speaker. I am consulting with the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion under whom PFRA is now operating. We will be taking appropriate action when we have the facts.

• (1150)

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is not the question I asked. The government of Canada put up 75 per cent of the \$120 million and the provision was that there was to be a certain amount of irrigation done. Has the minister communicated with the government of Saskatchewan to point out that what is being done is a repudiation of the agreement entered into with the government of Canada when the money was advanced which made possible the building of the dam with the assistance of the government of Saskatchewan? What is he going to do about it?

Mr. Davis: It seems to me that the right hon. gentleman is making a submission concerning an agreement with the government of Saskatchewan which he entered into in his period as Prime Minister of this country. We will look into it with a view to ensuring that the agreement is carried out.

Mr. Hees: Just answer the question. We just want a yes or no.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Has wedded bliss between the government of Saskatchewan and the NDP in this House resulted in the fact that while the Liberal party in Saskatchewan is taking a strong stand against this, it is not going to receive the support of the government of Canada?

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. When the minister is looking in this matter, will he ascertain whether or not there was a government in Saskatchewan from 1964 to 1971 that discontinued the extension of the irrigation works and whether or not that government was not in fact supported by and very friendly to the right hon. member for Prince Albert?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Hees.]

Mr. Speaker: It seems to me that we are getting into the area of debate and argument.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: We are running short of time. Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

Mr. Hees: Yes, Mr. Speaker. This will take very little time. It is very reassuring to hear the junior members of the coalition backing the senior members.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: We shall now return to the question period. The hon. member for Selkirk.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

DAMAGE TO HMCS "RESTIGOUCHE"—REASON FOR
ESTABLISHMENT OF LEGAL INQUIRY FOLLOWING
INITIAL INQUIRY REPORT—COST OF REPAIRS

Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence and is related to the questions I asked yesterday. Was it on instructions from the Minister of National Defence that the Canadian Armed Forces undertook the somewhat unusual step of establishing a board of legal inquiry into the damage done to HMCS *Restigouche* in refit following the report of the board of inquiry, and was this step taken because deliberate damage that might even be termed sabotage was discovered by the original board of inquiry or was it for the purpose of determining whether the government of Canada can take legal action against the shipyard?

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I would have to check the dates. I think the inquiry may have taken place before I became Minister of National Defence.

Mr. Rowland: Can the minister inform the House at this time what the cost of the repairs involved following the damage to the *Restigouche* has been and when the *Restigouche* will once again be ready for service? I refer to the cost over and above the \$12 million incurred in the original refit.

Mr. Richardson: I cannot give this cost figure now, but the *Restigouche* will be back in service very shortly. It is in operational order.

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ENERGY

PROPOSED WEST COAST OIL TANKER ROUTE—JOINT
CANADA-UNITED STATES COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER
CONTROL—PRESENT GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the fact, as reported yesterday, that the United States administration has now sent legislation to Congress which would circumvent the court's decision against the