

Oral Questions

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

• (1420)

NORTHERN CANADA POWER COMMISSION

TRANSFER OF YUKON PORTION TO TERRITORIAL CONTROL

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, with the signing a few days ago of the agreement transferring the Yukon part of the Northern Canada Power Commission from federal to territorial control and ownership an important milestone was reached in the assumption of provincial powers and authority by the Government of Yukon. This, of course, was in fulfilment of a longstanding policy of the Conservative Party of Canada.

Yukoners handled the negotiations expeditiously and well. They have wisely chosen to contract out the management of the assets to the private sector.

The federal Government is to be thanked for the generous way in which it wrote off much of Yukon NCPC's accumulated debt so as to leave a viable business operation.

It is important that the same issue as it affects the Northwest Territories be finalized with no more delay.

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NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS

PROPOSED PRODUCTION OF TRITIUM BY ONTARIO HYDRO

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, with the active encouragement and financial assistance of the federal Government, Ontario Hydro is currently developing facilities to recover tritium from Canadian nuclear reactors. It is planning to market tritium internationally.

Most tritium that is produced in the world today is used for the manufacture of hydrogen and neutron bombs. The Government may claim that it intends to sell tritium only for civilian use, but, apart from the fact that it is nearly impossible to verify what is eventually done with a nuclear product, Canadian exports would certainly free up huge supplies of tritium for use in weapons production. If the Government allows Ontario Hydro to proceed and to export tritium to countries which have the capability of producing nuclear weapons, then Canada will be responsible for increasing the world's ability to produce nuclear weapons twentyfold.

The Government's policy on tritium makes its commitments to arms reduction seem hollow. It is a policy that can only fuel the arms race. The Government should listen to the majority of Canadians who oppose all nuclear exports, and bring a halt to planning for the production and export of tritium.

[English]

FISHERIES

STAND TAKEN BY ST. PIERRE AND MIQUELON COLONY AGAINST MOTHER COUNTRY'S FISHING FLEET

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. Today we learned that the Economic Committee of the French colony of St. Pierre and Miquelon has issued an order that no factory trawler from France be off-loaded beyond 100 tonnes of cod fillet in order to prevent overfishing of the Gulf waters by the metropolitan French fleet, and that larger vessels will be refused refuelling. In view of the action taken by the people of St. Pierre and Miquelon will the Canadian Government be prepared to allow those French vessels to refuel in Canadian ports after being refused by the colony of St. Pierre and Miquelon? Will he protect our fishermen in the same way that this tiny colony is protecting its fishermen?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the appropriate context in which the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition has posed his question. Of course Canada would not insert itself into the position taken by the French colony of St. Pierre and Miquelon with respect to the fishing practices of French national vessels. However, we will examine very carefully this precedent in the context of my discussions with my colleagues, the Atlantic Council of Provincial Fisheries Ministers, when I meet them next week, as one of the various forms of initiative that our Government might take to continue to maximize the advantage to Canadian fishermen, and those of Newfoundland and Labrador in particular, resulting from those resources which we believe to be ours.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we see a situation in which a small isolated colony of France has shown more guts than a sovereign nation called Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I want to know what action the Government will take to protect our own fishermen who are being overfished by the metropolitan French fleet through the acquiescence of the Government?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition that we need take no lessons from the Government of which he was a part, or led, when it comes to showing guts. For the first time in decades the Government has raised fines, has agreed and undertaken to arm our vessels, increased our