

Inquiries of the Ministry

The continuation of this undesirable situation, and the heavy burden of these peace keeping expenditures, and the substantial increase in the size of the regular United Nations budget for other administrative costs has prompted the secretary general to make urgent pleas for strict economies in all fields of United Nations activity. In Geneva yesterday he was voicing his worries in relation to programs of economic and social development.

I might say to my hon. friend and to the house that the government of Canada shares fully his concern, and deeply regrets that it is not possible to deal with a peace keeping deficit of some \$120 million when the nations of the world find it so easy to find money to provide armaments for defensive and other purposes.

YEMEN—REPORTED USE OF POISON GAS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the presence of Canadian personnel with the United Nations force in Yemen and the reported use of poison gas and other chemicals in that area by another country, which is reportedly being investigated by the secretary general, can the Secretary of State for External Affairs bring us up to date on whether or not chemical warfare is being carried on in this area and, if so, are any measures being taken to protect Canadian personnel in the area?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the reports to which my hon. friend directs our attention with regard to the use of poison gas against the local inhabitants in Yemen. These are of course grave charges, and the United Nations has announced that the acting commander of its observer mission has been asked to provide a report on the matter. The Canadian government is, of course, in close day to day contact with those authorities to whom our concern should be directed, through our permanent mission at the United Nations in New York with regard to the functioning of the U.N. observer mission, and particularly the responsibilities and the security of the Canadian personnel involved.

POWER**COLUMBIA RIVER—AGREEMENT BY FORMER GOVERNMENT RESPECTING DOWNSTREAM BENEFITS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Gilles Gregoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Secre-

tary of State for External Affairs. Did the former Conservative government agree to the sale of downstream benefits under the Columbia river treaty, thus accepting the propositions of Premier Bennett?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am glad my hon. friend asked this question. I might add that article 8 of the original treaty negotiated by the right hon. gentleman opposite and his colleague allowed for the possible sale in the United States of undefined portions of Canada's downstream power benefits on conditions and within limits which were initially to be agreed on as soon as possible after the ratification date.

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Jean-Pierre Côté (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Was there any agreement between the British Columbia government and the government of Canada before the Columbia treaty was signed?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, there was no such agreement between the government of Canada and the government of British Columbia, and if there had been there would not have been this delay.

[Later:]

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In his statement in connection with the agreement between British Columbia and the dominion government over the sale of downstream benefits there were two points which were not made clear. Can the minister inform the house how much of Canada's share of the downstream benefits it was agreed would be sold in the United States and for what period was it agreed that these downstream benefits should be sold?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, these are matters that will be involved in the negotiations which I hope will begin very shortly with the United States. My hon. friend, with his great experience as a minister of the crown will appreciate how undesirable it would be at this stage to disclose any of the matters that will be covered by the negotiations between the two governments.

Mr. Harkness: Mr. Speaker, I think the minister has misapprehended my question. I asked him, what was the agreement between Canada and British Columbia on Canada's share of the downstream benefits which may be sold to the United States? Is it 50 per cent of Canada's share or is it 100 per