

Oral Questions

SYNCRUDE PROJECT—INCLUSION IN COST ESTIMATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF COST ESTIMATES WITHIN AND OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Would the minister inform the House in the current estimate of \$2 billion, which he says is still the one held by the government, whether environmental costs are included. When he answers that would he also consider tabling for hon. members of the House and for the public all of the aspects of the Syncrude project which are to be included in the estimates of the government and those cost estimates which will be outside the purview of the commitment of the federal government?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to make that clear. As I indicated in answer to a previous question, the studies done by the government of Alberta of course are its property rather than that of this government, and if there is to be a tabling, they would have to be translated. We would be glad to put before the House and before the committee the details of the nature of the obligations being assumed by the partnership and that being assumed by the government of Alberta.

With regard to environment, as I indicated, there is involved in the \$2 billion figure a contingency amount for environmental problems of the kind referred to.

Mr. Broadbent: I have a final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Due to the fact that by the time the House considers the estimates the agreement will already have been reached and therefore serious consideration of the policy would be too late, is the minister saying that the government does not intend the House to have the opportunity to investigate all aspects of the Syncrude project thoroughly prior to its making a commitment?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I would anticipate having some difficulty executing a contract in relation to the Syncrude project without first having the approval of the House for the appropriation to enter into the transaction.

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[Translation]

CRIMINAL CODE

RESTORATION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Solicitor General of Canada.

A policemen congress from the Maritime provinces took place recently where a resolution was adopted recommending the restoration of capital punishment in Canada. Is the minister aware of this resolution, did he receive a copy of it and did he follow it up?

[English]

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): No, Mr. Speaker, I have not yet received a copy of the said resolution, although I have read about it in the press. On the

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale)]

other hand, when I was invited to this meeting, I told the organizers that I already had a commitment for that particular day but that I would be willing to meet with representatives or the executive following the meeting to discuss the issues with them, but I have not yet heard from them.

[Translation]

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

The minister says he had a previous engagement, but if it had not been the case, can he affirm that he would have attended the congress?

[English]

Mr. Allmand: No, Mr. Speaker. I receive many requests for engagements in this country, and I had made a commitment on this occasion. I promised to meet representatives from that meeting, or their executive and so far I have not heard from them. If they wish to meet with me, I would be quite willing to do so.

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PENITENTIARIES

BRITISH COLUMBIA—ALLEGED LOCKING-UP OF NEWSPAPER REPORTERS—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, my question is also addressed to the Solicitor General. Is the Solicitor General aware that last evening 12 newsmen, including cameramen, who had gone to the B.C. penitentiary to get a news story in regard to a hostage being held at that time were invited inside and locked up—penned up, one might even say—and held incommunicado for over two hours, even half an hour after the hostage had been released?

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I was only advised by a newsman of this matter after I came into the House this afternoon, and I promised him that I would look into it immediately.

An hon. Member: Why did they let them out?

Mr. Allmand: I might say that I received information this morning about the hostage case, but I was not told about this incident with respect to the press.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, when the minister makes his report, would he let us know upon whose orders this particular action was taken and also the action that he proposes to take to ensure that this does not happen again and that those responsible will be dealt with appropriately?

Mr. Allmand: Yes, Mr. Speaker.