

Oral Questions

to which the hon. member refers. I stated yesterday in connection with the general comments of the officials of the Republic of Korea in respect of their over-all commitment, not to proceed in the direction of a nuclear weapons option. In the case of information which the hon. member is providing regarding a reprocessing plant, if it is to be acquired by the Republic of Korea, that would have to be considered in connection with safeguards we are presently negotiating with the Republic of Korea. We have stated in the House it is our intention to have written into any such agreement a Canadian hold on spent fuel.

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, in light of these revelations, which I for one happened to hear and see on the screen, and the fact that there are only two possible uses for plutonium separators, namely, the manufacture of nuclear bombs and to recycle plutonium, a process thought to be at least 20 years before it comes into operation, does the minister not think it is a little naive to accept the assurances of President Park that the Republic of Korea has no intention of developing a nuclear weapon?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, what I think is the important factor is that Canada, in negotiating its arrangements with the Republic of Korea, ensure that the political commitment given by President Park is reflected in the general safeguards we secure, particularly with respect to the processing of the spent fuel.

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[Translation]

AGRICULTURE**DAIRY INDUSTRY—MEASURES TO AVOID SURPLUS OF PRODUCTS**

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

Since we are now witnessing in Quebec an exceptional season for milk production, coupled with a considerable increase in the quantity of dairy products on the market, and since the Kraft Company of Canada has been importing enormous amounts of cheese and powder-milk from the United States, can the minister tell us whether he is aware of these circumstances and, if so, what steps does he intend to take with a view to preventing dairy product surpluses before April 1, 1976?

[English]

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Everything within our power, Mr. Speaker.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**NUMBER OF PRISONERS UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AND LONGEST PERIOD ANYONE IN THAT POSITION**

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General but before I put it I express to him my thanks for the correction he made in connection with certain information he

[Mr. MacEachen.]

gave yesterday and therefore exemplified a principle that is the essence of parliamentary government, which is when any member makes a statement that is incorrect or makes allegations against any member that are false he withdraws unreservedly. I thank the minister very much for giving an example to other members in this House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: I should like to ask the minister if he could give a list of the numbers today in death row in various penal institutions of our country, and in particular as well, the longest period any one of these prisoners who are convicted murderers has been in that very awkward position of being under the shadow of the gallows.

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, there are presently nine men who have been convicted of capital murder. This relates to seven cases. In two cases there were two accused in respect of one particular person murdered. There are nine men held awaiting appeal or whose applications are before cabinet for mercy.

Mr. Diefenbaker: How many?

Mr. Allmand: Three now have applications before cabinet for mercy. The other six are going through various stages of appeal.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Could the minister say, among those who are under the sentence of death, which of these prisoners has been for the longest period in the position of uncertainty because of cabinet uncertainty.

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, I do not have that exact information with me. My impression is that Mr. Rheel Chartrand, who recently pleaded his own case before the Supreme Court, is the one who has waited the longest time but his case has only recently been before the Supreme Court and will now go to cabinet.

GOVERNMENT INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO CARRYING OUT LAW CONCERNING CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. As the government has not carried out the law passed by Parliament two and one-half years ago which requires capital punishment for those found guilty of killing a prison guard or policeman while on duty, and as the government shows no indication of carrying out the law as passed by parliament, is it the intention of the government to continue in this vein and ignore this law or obey it?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that I must point out to the hon. member that he is misreading the law. The law does not make it mandatory on the government to hang people. It provides that under certain circumstances the penalty will be hanging, but it does not remove the prerogative of granting mercy. I must remind the House that in the speech which was referred to earlier by the hon. member for Annapolis Valley I made this clear. The House is always free to put in a statute that it withdraws from the