

Order Paper Questions

3. Public Works Canada is not involved in lease-back projects in the province of Quebec. The department has two lease purchase projects in the province of Quebec—Les Terrasses de la Chaudière and Place du Centre—and expenditures for these are as follows: Prior to 1976-77, nil; 1976-77, \$2 million; 1977-78, \$12 million (estimated); Total, \$14 million (estimated).

4. The budgeted amount for the above projects for 1978-79 is \$35 million; no budget has yet been established for 1979-80.

CHEMICAL WARFARE

Question No. 1,307—Mr. Jones:

1. Is the Canadian government aware that the Soviet Union's breeding of killer viruses and microbes, and if so, what are the specific names of these? What are the details of their effects?

2. Is the Canadian government aware that the Soviet Union stocks several kinds of chemical warfare agents, and if so, what do they include? What are the details of their effects?

3. How well prepared is Canada for any serious influx of dangerous diseases? What are the details of our operations in this regard?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): 1. Various bacteria and viruses are propagated in specialized laboratories in a number of countries. Some of these agents cause severe and frequently fatal disease in humans, as for example, smallpox (variola virus), viral encephalitis (western equine encephalitis, eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis), plague (*Yersinia pestis*), and viral hemorrhagic fevers (ebola and marburg viruses). One purpose of such laboratory propagation is in attempts to isolate and identify, from clinical specimens, the causative agent of disease in a human; another reason is for the preparation of the reagents required for the laboratory serological diagnosis of such diseases. We have no information that the Soviet Union is propagating these or similar agents for other purposes. The symptoms of these different diseases are varied but the clinical manifestations of some such as smallpox, viral encephalitis and plague are well known. The hemorrhagic fevers are associated with a variety of symptoms, predominantly severe headache, sore throat, muscle pain and internal bleeding.

2. It is probable that a number of countries have experimented with different kinds of chemical warfare agents. These range from agents such as lacrimators (tear gases), to those causing skin blisters and burns (vesicants), to those causing rapid death (nerve gases based on organo-phosphated).

3. It has been recognized that with increasing international travel there is also an increased risk of importation of dangerous diseases previously unknown in this country. A working party set up by the Department of National Health and Welfare has prepared a Canadian contingency plan for a co-ordinated response to national communicable disease emergencies. It is also known that the control of dangerous imported and domestic diseases depends upon the availability of a laboratory with facilities which permit accurate early diagnosis under conditions which provide maximum protection to the laboratory staff and to the general public and a hospital isolation facility. The federal government is committed to the

[Mr. Buchanan.]

construction of such a hospital isolation unit and a maximum security laboratory. In addition, there is extensive contact between federal and provincial governments to assure the required acquisition of associated portable isolation equipment.

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[Translation]

QUESTION PASSED AS ORDER FOR RETURN

Mr. Yvon Pinard (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, if question No. 751 could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately.

[Text]

PUBLIC WORKS

Question No. 751—Mr. Howie:

Since January 1, 1977, what amount was spent on interior landscaping by the Department of Public Works and on what projects?

Return tabled.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The questions enumerated by the parliamentary secretary have been answered. Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Friday, May 26, consideration of the motion of Mr. Chrétien that Bill C-56, to amend the statute law relating to income tax and to authorize payments related to provincial sales tax reductions, be read the second time and referred to the committee of the whole, and of the amendment (Mr. Broadbent) (p. 5548).

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, in its editorial on May 20 the *Winnipeg Free Press* said the following of the federal budget:

It is now starkly clear that the federal government has bungled the sales tax announced in the April 10 budget.

That editorial comment is not exclusive to the *Winnipeg Free Press* or is it a viewpoint exclusive to western Canada. That viewpoint is one that is generally held by Canadians who have studied the debacle which has resulted from the April 10 budget, and the only defenders of the position and the counter-