

penditure of the taxpayer's money on a SAGE-Bomarc system which no longer retains the confidence—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: It seems to me the hon. member is putting forth a case rather than asking a question.

Mr. Hellyer: Mr. Speaker, I think it is a very important question whether this system which is no longer effective justifies the expenditure of the Canadian taxpayers' money.

Mr. Speaker: I am not denying that it is an important question. I am only suggesting it is not the proper place to debate it.

[Later:]

Mr. Hellyer: May I put another question? Can the minister tell us whether tenders have been called for the same work at the Bomarc site installation at Mont Laurier.

Hon. Raymond O'Hurley (Minister of Defence Production): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should reply to this in place of the Minister of National Defence. Tenders have been called, and tenders have been submitted to the Department of Defence Production and we are studying those tenders at the present time.

Mr. Hellyer: Can the minister tell us when the contract will be awarded?

Mr. O'Hurley: It depends on the length of time it will take to study the tenders.

Mr. Hellyer: Can the minister tell us whether the length of time required has any reference to or any relationship whatsoever with the controversy raging at the present time in respect to the cancellation of this program?

Mr. O'Hurley: Mr. Speaker, when we get a contract demand from the Department of National Defence we work on that contract demand until such time as the Department of National Defence advises us that they want to cancel it, and so far we have not got any notice to that effect.

RADAR GAP FILLERS—INQUIRY RESPECTING INSTALLATION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct another question to the Minister of National Defence. Can the minister tell the house whether or not the government is proceeding with the installation of the radar gap fillers which are designed to give warning against the approach of manned bombers?

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Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. G. R. Pearkes (Minister of National Defence): Regarding gap fillers, sites have been selected but in all cases the ground has not yet been acquired and no construction work has started.

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

REPORTED U.S. CONFUSION OVER PRIORITY PLANS FOR LOCKAGE

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier): May I direct a question to the Minister of Transport and ask him if his attention has been drawn to an article in the *Chicago Tribune* entitled "Priority plan for seaway upsets lines", in which it is stated that United States shipping interests are in a state of confusion over conflicting information from Canada on the status of priority plans for lockage? Is the minister aware of this, and has any priority been established as between different forms of cargo on the St. Lawrence seaway or the Welland canal?

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): No, Mr. Speaker, I have not seen the article. Last year when congestion occurred in the Welland canal priorities were instituted which I think served the shipping interests very well. If at any time further congestion occurs, priorities will again be instituted. We hope that this year it will not be necessary to introduce such priorities.

Mr. Chevrier: The point of my query was that the United States lines were complaining that they had asked for information from Canada and had received no reply within the last 30 days, I think it said.

Mr. Hees: The inquiry was not directed to me. However, any information about priorities will be given if such priorities are needed. As I say, we hope priorities will not be needed.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

DISARMAMENT—INQUIRY AS TO INCLUSION OF RED CHINA IN CONFERENCE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. L. D. Crestohl (Cartier): I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. As the disarmament conference is now progressing, I wonder whether the minister could report whether approaches have been made to include China in the disarmament conference, because otherwise disarmament might be only one-sided.

Hon. Howard C. Green (Secretary of State for External Affairs): If the hon. member would refer again to the western plan he