

Canada. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources said that they always complain, but "at least they haven't brought in the CIA." Is this the signal of a new direction for Canada in foreign affairs?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, I think one would be stupid to think that.

* * *

CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

REPORTED TESTING OF CHEMICAL DEFOLIANTS

Mr. Terry Sargeant (Selkirk-Interlake): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. I have a report from the United States army known as the Gagetown report. It shows that in 1966 our forces at CFB Gagetown participated with the American army in the testing of chemical defoliants, among them the carcinogenic agents orange, purple and white destined for use in Vietnam. Would the Prime Minister tell us why the government has steadfastly denied for so many years that Canadian forces ever participated in such testing?

● (1125)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I did not understand a word of the question. If the hon. member would speak more slowly and hon. members opposite would keep quiet, I will attempt to answer it.

Mr. Sargeant: Madam Speaker, my question arises out of a report I have from the United States army. It is known as the Gagetown report. It shows that in 1966 our forces at CFB Gagetown, New Brunswick, participated with the American army in the testing of chemical defoliants, among them the agents orange, purple and white, all of which are carcinogens. Would the Prime Minister please tell us why his government for so many years has steadfastly denied that Canadian forces participated in such testing?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, something which happened in 1966 is not fresh in my memory. If the hon. member would permit, I will take the question as notice.

Madam Speaker: One supplementary from the hon. member for Selkirk-Interlake.

Mr. Sargeant: Madam Speaker, my question was: Why has he denied that we participated in anything involved with the Vietnam war? I think that question requires a simple answer, whether he knows the details with regard to 1966 or not. Why does he deny we have ever participated in anything to do with the Vietnam war when I have proof here that we were, indeed, involved?

Mr. Trudeau: I do not know in what way the hon. member suggests we were involved in the Vietnam war. If there were some joint experiences between Canadian and American forces, of which I know nothing, until the hon. member gives

me time to inquire I have no evidence that they had to do with the Vietnam war. There have been joint NORAD operations. There have been joint NATO operations. I do not think it is sound to conclude that every member of NORAD or NATO was involved in the war in Vietnam, which was a war which involved the United States.

TESTING OF CHEMICAL DEFOLIANTS—MONITORING OF EFFECTS

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Was her department informed of the Gagetown testing? Has the ministry monitored any possible health hazards to the general population in the vicinity, as well as Canadian personnel involved in the Gagetown operation?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, I am not familiar with this case, and I will inquire and get all the details that can be uncovered.

* * *

[English]

ENERGY

TAXES ON OIL AND NATURAL GAS—REPORTED STATEMENT BY MINISTER RESPECTING POSSIBLE REDUCTION

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. In view of the statements made yesterday by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to Indian bands in Alberta to the effect that he would try to find ways to reduce the 8 per cent wellhead tax on oil and the 30 per cent tax on natural gas, did he have the assurance of the Minister of Finance that in fact he could do that? Is the Minister of Finance now actively pursuing positive policies which will benefit Indians in this area?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I have not heard the comments of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources on that subject. I have no intention of changing those particular legislative proposals, which are already before the House.

LOSS OF REVENUE BY INDIAN BANDS

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin): My supplementary question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In view of the potential loss of many millions of dollars in income committed by Indian bands have made because of the revenue they have been receiving from natural gas and oil, is the minister actively making representations to the Minister of Finance about the serious nature of this problem? Is he encouraging him to make some changes?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, I have met with