

climatic conditions in the area of Winnipeg showed that valuable data for civil defence purposes could be obtained by studying smoke particles under varying conditions, and that this would involve the release of small quantities of fluorescent particles.

On that basis the city council gave approval but it was not told, according to a spokesman for the Department of National Defence, Major Haswell, as reported in yesterday's *Globe and Mail* that the tests were to determine how radioactive fall-out from a nuclear explosion would be dispersed by the wind currents around an urban centre. It is clear from what Major Haswell said yesterday that the civil servants in the Department of National Defence in 1953 hid the real purpose of the tests from the elected officials of the city of Winnipeg.

I submit, Madam Speaker, that such action is completely inexcusable. It is completely unacceptable that some group of civil servants, whether in the Department of National Defence or the RCMP, should deliberately lie to the elected representatives of any body in this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Orlikow: In a democratic society it is the elected representatives who have the right and the responsibility to make the decisions. If they make wrong decisions, the electorate can determine that and, if necessary, elect another group of people at the next election. It is not the right of any civil servant or of any bureaucrat to decide that it is in the interests of somebody or other that the truth should be kept from elected representatives.

Today's *Globe and Mail* reports Major Haswell, the national defence spokesman in Ottawa, as admitting that the U.S. army misled residents of Winnipeg about the spraying in order to avoid creating anxiety. Madam Speaker, I suggest that there is no way in which United States officials could have misled the people of Winnipeg except with the knowledge and co-operation of officials of the Department of National Defence in Ottawa—our officials.

Yesterday's *Globe and Mail* also reports Major Haswell as saying:

—the substance is considered harmless and that the Winnipeg and Manitoba civil defence agencies were aware of the tests at the time.

Madam Speaker, I think we have a right to know just what the civil defence agencies in Winnipeg and Manitoba knew. Did they know that these were tests for radioactive fall-out? If they knew that and did not tell the elected officials in Winnipeg, they are just as guilty as the people in national defence.

The other point I want to raise is that yesterday the parliamentary secretary in the House and Major Haswell in *The Globe and Mail* today said that the tests were considered harmless. The same article in *The Globe and Mail* today quotes Professor Frank LaBella, a very well-known medical researcher at the University of Manitoba's pharmacology department, as saying:

—both cadmium and zinc are toxic and could be dangerous to babies, old people, asthma patients and sick people.

Privilege—Mr. Sargeant

He went on to say—

—the metals are more dangerous when used in aerosol form, as in the Winnipeg experiments.

He also said—

—there have been a number of deaths and reported cases of brain damage in industrial workers dealing with cadmium sulphide.

This is a very serious matter, Madam Speaker. It was a very dangerous way to mislead the people of Winnipeg and it ought not to have happened. I think the way the parliamentary secretary answered the questions yesterday was shoddy, to say the least, and I should like to be assured not only that steps will be taken to ensure the same kind of thing will not happen again, but that there have not been other tests and that there may not be tests in the future without the people of my city or any other that is affected being told what is going on.

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Madam Speaker, I do not intend to speak for very long on this question. The point made by the hon. member for Selkirk-Interlake (Mr. Sargeant), namely, that information that has been given in this House has left an incorrect impression, is one with which I agree. I think the hon. member made that point very well.

The problem is obviously that this incident took place 27 years ago and the question now arises after the fact. It may be asked why we are raising it as a question of privilege now. The point that I have tried to make in my questions and which other questioners have tried to make is that it is the responsibility of government and those who speak for government, if they intend to give information—and, of course, they have the right to withhold information—to see that such information is accurate. On two different occasions the parliamentary secretary stated that, while the full details are not known about the tests and that tests are continuing or research is going on, they were not harmful to human life.

I find it rather incongruous that she is able to make the unequivocal statement that the test was not harmful to human life, while at the same time tests or research are still going on.

The hon. D. L. Campbell, who was premier of Manitoba in 1953 and is a very highly respected person, pointed out in an interview on Manitoba radio two days ago that, first, he could not recall ever having been informed of the tests taking place when he was in Winnipeg as premier; and, second, that at that time civil defence came under the aegis of municipal governments rather than provincial governments.

I think all of us know now that records of the committee of health for the city of Winnipeg in 1953 have now been found and that they make reference to these tests. The records do not show that the tests involved chemical or biological warfare but, rather, were tests relating to a smoke cover for the city of Winnipeg.

Another point concerns me deeply and that is the question of who made the decision for Canada to get involved in this kind of activity. The parliamentary secretary has tried to assure the people of Winnipeg that the tests were not harmful to human life and that we should simply take her good word on behalf of the government. I should like to do that. But the