

*Oral Questions*

or 6,000 civilians who live in the immediate vicinity of the camp area.

Will the minister now tell the House what the result of the investigation was, and in light of Tuesday's decision in the U.S. Senate of the dangers of Agent Orange, is he now prepared to recognize that there is a strong likelihood of adverse human reactions to those tests of Agent Orange in the Camp Gagetown area?

[Translation]

**Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence):** Madam Speaker, I must say that the matter concerning the spreading of Agent Orange at Camp Gagetown was taken very seriously when it was raised a few months ago. I think it is unfair to compare the spraying of Agent Orange in a test involving only a very limited number of Canadian or American servicemen with the massive spraying of the same agent in Vietnam.

When this matter was raised a few months ago, our officials tried to contact most of the servicemen who had taken part in this test. Their findings were minimal.

The House will also remember that at the time, I offered the government of New Brunswick, which was spraying its own forests, and various specialized medical groups to co-operate with them, if necessary, to ascertain the effects of Agent Orange on those involved in the test. The opinions differ greatly on this, some medical authorities even claiming there is no danger. Others say that it is indeed dangerous. We are still prepared to co-operate with the provincial government or the medical organizations.

[English]

**Mr. Corbett:** Madam Speaker, the fact of the matter is that this is a federal government responsibility. It is not the responsibility of the provincial government or any other agency. This is a federal government responsibility. The federal government approved the tests back in 1966. A Liberal government did that, and it is time that this government stopped shilly-shallying around and recognized that the people, the civilians in that region, are not to be expected to act as laboratory animals for tests that this government has perpetuated upon them.

● (1440)

## REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

**Mr. Bob Corbett (Fundy-Royal):** This government promised an investigation. Again, I ask the minister if he is prepared to take his responsibilities to the people who are under federal jurisdiction in that region around Camp Gagetown and to initiate that investigation, forgetting about any provincial responsibility because it does not exist, and get a report back to this jurisdiction, the federal House, as quickly as possible, within the next few weeks and tell us just what we can expect, and what the people of the region can expect, as a result of the tests which are its responsibility?

[Translation]

**Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence):** Madam Speaker, I suggest that this government fully assumed its responsibility when it refused to carry out an investigation on the very few people who had participated in this test, but instead to do so with the co-operation of the province or provinces which are using the same defoliant, and also with medical groups which may have much more expertise in this area than the hon. member of the opposition.

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[English]

## GRAIN

## DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION TO BE PAID TO FARMERS FOR EMBARGO ON SHIPMENTS TO RUSSIA

**Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert):** Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture I should like to put a question to his parliamentary secretary, in the hope that he knows a little more about the embargo than the Minister of Transport.

Given that the embargo payments were established at \$81 million today in Winnipeg, and as the parliamentary secretary knows yesterday the University of Saskatchewan study—and here I disagree with the Minister of Transport—showed \$117 million, and the Wheat Board study was over \$100 million, could the parliamentary secretary explain the discrepancy between these studies and the level at which the government decided to put this compensation?

[Translation]

**Mr. Marcel Ostiguy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture):** As the Minister of Transport explained a moment ago, Madam Speaker, a first study had been made. It was about \$61 million. The Canadian government has now offered \$81 million, and I think that what the Minister of Transport said earlier is quite accurate.

[English]

## FACTS USED IN ARRIVING AT DECISION

**Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert):** Madam Speaker, in light of that answer and the discrepancies between the position of the parliamentary secretary on these studies and our understanding of them, would he assure the House, as did the Minister of Agriculture when he said, and I quote:

At the time of finalization of this program all the facts with respect to how it came about will be made public.

—that all the facts about how this amount was arrived at will be put before the Standing Committee on Agriculture or the House so that we can examine them?

**Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport):** Madam Speaker, if I may answer that, all the different studies which led to different amounts from \$71 million to \$125 million, will be given to members to read. They will be available and hon.