

Oral Questions

tell us whether the government intends to take action against the offending companies?

[Translation]

Mr. Lalonde: Mr. Speaker, once again the most severe sanction in these cases is surely the one resulting from the publicity among the public indicating the firm concerned. As to specific prosecutions in the cases before us at present, it is very doubtful for example, that we will succeed in a prosecution on the first offence because it is very difficult to establish whether the contamination of the samples seized comes from an action of the industry in question or happened at an earlier stage.

[English]

GROUND BEEF—REQUEST FOR NAMES OF RETAILERS SELLING CONTAMINATED MEAT

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): The minister has indicated that publicity is the best way of stopping these incidents. Would he, then, tell us the names of the companies involved?

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[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

REPLACEMENT OF ARGUS AIRCRAFT—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Defence.

Can the minister tell this House whether studies aimed at replacing main armament items, like the Argus aircraft for instance, have been completed?

[English]

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Yes, Mr. Speaker. Studies are under way. We are in the contract definition phase. We have selected two manufacturers, the Boeing Company and the Lockheed Company, but we do not expect to make a final decision for several months.

[Translation]

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

The minister said that a final decision has not been taken yet, but could he tell the relation between current advertising by Lockheed in some newspapers for the Orion aircraft, apparently to have it accepted by the Canadian public, since it is a model designed neither for tourists nor for sports amateurs? Could he also tell us whether pressures are made by the company to have the aircraft accepted by the department?

[English]

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Speaker, we have received representations concerning the Orion, which is a British plane, but it was ruled out in the competition some time ago.

[Mr. Rodriguez.]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

NORRIS COMMISSION—REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOUR CONCERNING DOCUMENTS IN ARCHIVES

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Typical of the stonewalling and roadblocks we encounter when we seek legitimate information from the government about the relationship between this government and this minister with respect to the SIU—

Some hon. Members: Question!

Mr. Lawrence: One week ago I asked the minister to tell us the instructions given to the National Archives relating to the requirements of the deputy minister of labour for people who wanted to get access to the documents, material and transcripts of the Norris Commission. In the light of the public pronouncements of the Commissioner, may I ask the minister what those instructions are, who gave them and why they are being continued today?

● (1500)

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, without in any way condoning or discussing the innuendo or implication behind the hon. member's question, there is no stonewalling. There is no attempt to hide any information. We have said in this House on many occasions that we have been waiting for the information to come from the province upon which to base an assessment, and this process has been continuing all these weeks. At the moment it is not indicative of very much new, as I previously indicated in this House.

With reference to the particular question asked by the hon. member, the situation is that we cannot divulge information that comes to the attention of commissions if it is against the law. Certainly, this would include material that would embarrass Canada in its relations with any other government, material that would be considered by any government to be a breach of faith on the part of the government of Canada, or material that would violate the right of privacy of any individual. I am sure that the hon. member would agree with that statement.

The position regarding the national archivist is that senior officials of my department, in co-operation with him, will be carrying on consultations and will go through this material to see whether or not it does contravene the law with respect to the revelation of the material. When that task is completed I will be pleased to inform the hon. member further as to what the situation is.

Mr. McKinnon: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I am sure the minister of defence would not wish to mislead the House, even inadvertently. Did I understand him correctly to say that the Orion was a British plane and was no longer under consideration?

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Victoria for drawing this to the attention of the House. My translation was not coming through clearly and I thought the hon. member was referring to the Nimrod, which is a British plane and which was ruled out. I appreciate this opportunity of making this correction.