

National Defence, and say not only artillery ammunition but mustard gas was dumped into the Pacific Ocean.

In a front page story on September 17, 1947, the *Victoria Times-Colonist* reported:

Four hundred and fifty tons of gas which was developed for chemical warfare is now lying at dockside at the government drydock, Esquimalt, waiting to be loaded aboard a dump scow which will take it out to the Pacific Ocean for dumping.

A photograph of military personnel wearing rubber gloves and loading material from a railway car accompanied the story.

On December 13, 1988, Colonel Conrad Mialkowski admitted that the Canadian military did dump shells containing mustard gas, but the new claim with the suddenly found records is that it was dumped 160 kilometres off the coast of B.C. What fails to be mentioned is the same evidence of one of the same ex-servicemen who pointed out that the scow sailed at dusk and returned at dawn. Again, this was a serviceman who was at the site. There is not a scow made, even if it was towed by hovercraft, which could in that time go 160 kilometres off Victoria for dumping.

This is a very serious matter. The Minister of National Defence advised there were no records. Senior people in his Department advised that there were no records. When they are caught by the media, caught by ex-servicemen and Members of Parliament, suddenly there are records. Suddenly, they claim that they know exactly where the mustard gas is located, exactly when it went there, and how it got there and so on.

This is a serious matter. Mustard gas that was dumped off the coast of France in exactly the same year, 1947, was subsequently picked up in fishing equipment, brought on board a fishing vessel and blinded 12 fishermen.

I would like to hear from the Minister of National Defence. Prior to doing that, I believe I have proven a prima facie case that I have been misled by a Minister of the Crown, and that I have been misled intentionally or otherwise by senior officials in the Department of National Defence. I am prepared to move the necessary motion that this matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure.

I do not think that Members of Parliament, their researchers or the media should be misled on matters that could affect the health and well-being of Canadian citizens or anyone else.

Privilege—Mr. Fulton

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Defence and Acting Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, what we witness here this afternoon is the Hon. Member, who was recognized during Question Period and chose to raise a question with a totally different Minister of the Crown, now getting up following Question Period, not to raise a bona fide question of privilege but rather to attempt—

An Hon. Member: Let the Speaker decide.

Mr. Beatty: Indeed, Mr. Speaker, you will have the opportunity to decide, as soon as you have all of the facts as opposed to the misinformation and partial information that has been given to you by the Hon. Member, who has a track record in that respect, as he demonstrated in the case of Suffield earlier this year.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Beatty: Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members opposite might extend the same courtesy to me that I extended to the Hon. Member when he was making his false allegations.

Mr. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Tell the truth.

Mr. Beatty: The Hon. Member opposite says: "Tell the truth". Let me read to you, Mr. Speaker, from the letter that was quoted by the Hon. Member.

Mr. Speaker: I remind both sides in this discussion that it is an application on a question of privilege. I am not interested in hearing allegations about each other. I hope that other Hon. members will keep that in mind.

Mr. Beatty: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member quoted from the first paragraph of a letter which I sent to a person who is now a researcher for him. Curiously, he ended his quotation before going on to the second paragraph. He quoted this section:

Thank you for the letter of October 4, 1988 in which you inquired about the dumping of World War II shells containing nerve gas and mustard gas in the Pacific in 1947. There is no record of such an operation.

There the quotation ends. Had he had the courtesy to continue, Mr. Speaker, you would have heard the following:

If you are aware of any evidence that such dumping did occur, I would be anxious to receive it. As you probably know, surplus Canadian World War II stocks of mustard gas were dumped in the Atlantic in 1946; the gas was not in shells but in sealed metal drums. This operation was the subject of a number of articles in the press in