

Oral Questions

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Just a question.

CONTENT OF NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States has said that everything is on the table in these negotiations in his letter to Senator Packwood. Does that mean that Canadian culture and Canadian regional development programs are on the table in these negotiations? You cannot have it both ways. Give us a straight answer.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, first, the Hon. Member owes it to this House, if he expects to begin to be taken seriously, that when he quotes Ministers or anyone else, to give full quotations. Second, the Government of Canada has made it very clear that matters which are not trade matters, the nature of our culture, our Industrial Development Programs and our Unemployment Insurance Programs, are naturally not at issue in a trade negotiation. Trade matters are.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

EL SALVADOR—STATUS OF CANADIAN JOURNALISTS

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Would the Minister report to the House on the present status of the two Canadians who were detained by the Salvadorian Army?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, given just a moment I will do exactly that. It is a serious question and I appreciate it. Two Canadians who were arrested Monday, April 24, when they went into Lempa in the Province of Chalatenango, a zone declared a war zone, without either special permits or prior authorization to enter. Since then the two Canadians were released, on April 24, and they are believed to be continuing their journalism project on war refugees.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

TOXIC RAIN—PROVISIONS OF FORTHCOMING LEGISLATION

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of the Environment my question is directed to the Parliamentary Secretary. It relates again to the study released today by the Canadian Environmental Law Research Foundation with regard to the whole question of toxic rain. Would the Parliamentary Secretary advise the House whether

the new proposed Environmental Contaminants Act will deal with this problem and effectively eliminate the health threat posed to Canadians by this toxic rain?

Mr. G. M. Gurbin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the report which was released today has not yet been fully assessed by our Department nor by the Minister. However, it includes those things which we in fact have been addressing over a period of a year and a half or more in the Department of the Environment in coming up with solutions. The basic point in question is the coverage or management of our toxic chemicals from the very inception, or “cradle”, if you like, to their final destruction, or to the grave. This will very much be a part of the new Environmental Contaminants Act and Environmental Protection Act which we are now considering.

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TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS—U.S. PRESIDENT'S LETTER—COST OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls—White Bay—Labrador): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In his letter to Senator Packwood, President Reagan said: “We will want to make sure the outcome provides for comparable treatment for American and Canadian investment and intellectual property rights in both countries”. Does the President mean by this that he expects the Government of Canada will cave into the heavy lobby from American pharmaceuticals? And does that mean that the policy under which Canadians now save \$200 million a year on prescription drugs will change and that Canadians will have to pay higher prices after these talks are over?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I interpret that portion of the President's letter to Senator Packwood, as I think most fair-minded people do, as being the setting out of American objectives. Canadian objectives on some of these questions, including investment questions, are different. Naturally the President of the United States has the right to speak for his objectives, as we do for ours.

REQUEST FOR INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls—White Bay—Labrador): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. If this means that Canadians will continue to enjoy the same low prices for prescription drugs, and if the talks are now going ahead, will the Minister bring forward a Bill so we can see what is there and assure Canadians that, indeed, their low prices for prescription drugs will be protected?