

Oral Questions

I urge the members of the House to support Pharmacy Awareness Week and participate in making the issue better known.

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[Translation]

MEMBER FOR LAURIER—SAINTE-MARIE

Mr. Martin Cauchon (Outremont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, four times a year, the House of Commons meets the cost of publishing a householder prepared by each member of Parliament to keep their constituents informed.

In his latest householder, a Bloc member published a letter under the heading "Changes required at the CECM". In this letter, the member argued the need for a school that meets modern-day needs and one with a resolutely forward-looking curriculum, adding that in the current debate, only MEMO offered such a perspective.

I must admit that, on the surface, the connection between the member's mandate and school board elections is not obvious. However, we are not naive enough to believe that this statement has nothing to do with the fact that the member's spouse is a MEMO candidate in ward No. 9 in Montreal.

Taxpayers strongly object to their taxes being used to indirectly fund the election campaign of the wife of the hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

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[English]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, here is something I would like the ministers of agriculture, transport and finance to think about before they discontinue the so-called Crow benefit.

In my region the benefit is worth between \$22 and \$28 per tonne. We grow about one tonne of crop per acre and good land rents between \$20 and \$30 per acre.

If the benefit disappears and freight costs rise by a like amount, the cash rental value of those lands becomes zero. The financial effect on the region is to further deflate farm land values by several hundred dollars per acre. This equity, which will disappear with the decline and demise of the Crow benefit, is what farmers and their communities have been using as collateral to borrow funds for economic diversity.

The proposal to save some \$600 million per year will take billions of dollars worth of value and equity from existing farms and businesses in western Canada and will trigger further bankruptcies and business failures.

How can the government justify that?

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● (1415)

CIDA FUNDING

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to CIDA and our foreign aid program, the inmates are running the asylum.

Since 1991 the Canadian Wilderness Committee has received around \$300,000 from CIDA. The Sierra Club of Western Canada and the Clayoquot Biosphere Project have also received CIDA funding.

To my best recollection, British Columbia is still a part of this great nation. Why then is nearly half a million dollars being misspent to bolster the efforts of anti-logging radicals?

This is blatant interference in British Columbia's jurisdiction over its natural resources. B.C. is battling to maintain the considerable lumber exports in the face of a concerted campaign of disinformation by these very groups.

We are neck deep in debt. What little foreign aid we can afford should go to those most in need. The federal government, which has not shown any great competence in managing natural resources, has no business interfering in provincial concerns.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

ETHICS

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the ethics counsellor, Howard Wilson, said on television this morning that at no time did he receive from the Prime Minister or his colleagues the mandate to investigate the heritage minister's direct interference in the CRTC's business.

My question is for the Prime Minister. Does he confirm what his counsellor said?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all the facts relating to this issue were clearly put on the table; these are public documents available to all. The counsellor, Mr. Wilson, is aware of the facts, but he does not need to investigate. All the facts are public knowledge and have been discussed in this House for several days.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ): Mr. Speaker, are we to understand that the Prime Minister deliberately neglected to ask his ethics counsellor to investigate last week because he did not want to have to justify the decision to overlook this matter which he had made a month earlier when he was informed of his minister's mistake?