

joined indicate that the fears which are in the hearts of all Canadians regarding the safety of prisoners held by the rebels are justified by the danger in which they find themselves?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, Canada has joined in the appeal to which my right hon. friend has made reference. I believe this is the second appeal of this kind that has been made, and I understand its terms will be made public today or tomorrow. We are most hopeful, Mr. Speaker, as my right hon. friend has expressed, that this appeal will be successful in saving these hostages from assassination.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, has the government received any hopeful indication in this regard? I realize the limitations in speaking at this time, with these people facing the horrible and frightful danger in which they find themselves. Will the Prime Minister also say when the first appeal was made to have India assist?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, on the first question I know of no grounds which would justify any modification of the very serious assessment of the situation given by my hon. friend the Secretary of State for External Affairs. As far as the second question is concerned, I think the first appeal was made between two and three weeks ago.

Mr. Diefenbaker: When the right hon. gentleman says that an appeal was made three weeks ago, was that made through India, and was India asked at that time to have its legation or embassy in that country do what it could in this connection? Also, what reports have been received in consequence of that first appeal?

Mr. Pearson: The first appeal was not made in conjunction with other governments, some of whom had already made separate appeals. The first appeal was from the Canadian government alone to whatever sources we could reach which would have, as we thought, some influence in saving these hostages. Up to this time there have been no concrete results from that appeal, but it is to be hoped that the appeals that have been made by Canada and other countries separately, the steps that have been taken by Canadian representatives and now this joint appeal will be effective in saving these hostages.

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Inquiries of the Ministry

HEALTH AND WELFARE

FAILURE OF DRUG MANUFACTURERS TO MEET GOVERNMENT STANDARDS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the alarming revelation that only 63 out of 140 drug producers in this country were able to meet the government's minimum manufacturing standards, does the government intend to take any steps to increase the staff of the drug and food administration in order to correct this apparently deplorable situation?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have had some discussion with my colleague the Minister of National Health and Welfare, and she may wish to answer this question.

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, this matter has been given wide publicity in the last few days, and I should like to say to the chamber that the differences between the regulations which apply to all drugs manufactured in the country and the regulations which are used by the Department of Industry are very minor. It is in relation to minor differences in lay-out of plants, storage of materials and things of that kind that most of the manufacturers have been disqualified in the sense that term was used in the committee. I am informed that in so far as safety and quality are concerned there is no difference between the drug manufacturers on one list or the other.

I am grateful for the suggestion of my hon. friend to the Prime Minister that it may be that the drug directorate will need additional inspectors. As must be apparent, the drug directorate has not now and is unlikely ever to have sufficient staff to inspect every drug manufacturer every day. Nevertheless, if my hon. friend will check he will note that in the estimates each year there is a modest increase in the number of inspectors applied for to treasury board and which this house sees fit to approve in the estimates. I have no doubt this number will increase, and that from year to year we will need more inspectors to keep up with this increasingly complex industry.

Mr. Douglas: May I ask the minister if she is satisfied after having looked into the matter that the public are getting the highest possible quality of drugs for which they are paying? May I also ask her at the same time