

Oral Questions

Mr. Crosbie: Madam Speaker, if the Prime Minister needs any help from us, we have already stated our support for President Reagan's initiative.

CONSTRUCTION OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ON OCCUPIED LANDS

Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Madam Speaker, the President of Egypt said this morning that Canada could help influence Israel because we have many connections there. I presume he has asked the Prime Minister to increase our activities in that direction to get a Middle East settlement. Could the Prime Minister tell the House whether we are opposing further construction by Israel of settlements in the Gaza Strip and on the West Bank? Can the Prime Minister tell us what representations we have made? Does the Prime Minister think that the peace process can proceed without the freezing of those settlements by Israel? What is our position on that?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, our position has been stated several times by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It is to the effect that we do oppose the settlement policy on the West Bank. It is part of Resolution 242 which we support, that all lands occupied by Israel should be evacuated, and that includes the West Bank. We have stated those positions publicly. We have stated them also to the Government of Israel.

My inclination at this stage would be to feel that our influence—our joint influence, since the Tory Party is joining the Government on this—would be to increase our pressure on the Americans to carry through with their plan, because I do not feel that it is very likely that we will get the present Government of Israel to change its settlements policy.

* * *

● (1450)

[Translation]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL FOR TRANSPORTATION OF WESTERN GRAIN—CONSEQUENCES FOR QUEBEC FARMERS

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Economic Development. Considering the concern raised by the new Western grain shipping plan, especially among Quebec farmers, could the Minister, in view of today's statement, inform the House whether he held prior consultations with the Quebec Farm Producers' Union or other farm organizations in Quebec to find out whether today's proposal would be acceptable to Quebec's agricultural industry?

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Minister of State for Economic Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I have the impression that my colleague, the Hon. Minister of Transport, had consultations throughout

the province and across Canada. In fact, he is well aware of the concern mentioned by the Hon. Member for Joliette. In any case, Madam Speaker, I would like to point out that this concern is ill-founded and although a number of representatives of the Parti Québécois have tried to dramatize the situation across the province, we have been given the assurance, by independent studies, that there is no reason for people to be concerned about this policy.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE—INQUIRY WHETHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS UNION OF QUEBEC WAS CONSULTED

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Madam Speaker, I have also heard the Members of the Quebec Government expressing their concern, but I have also received letters from representatives of the Quebec Farm Producers' Union who were worried and were demanding positive action on the part of Members of the Government. Therefore, I am just asking the Minister whether he can provide some clarification, since the Minister of Agriculture in a letter to the Quebec Farm Producers' Union has stated that the apprehended negative effects would and should disappear as a result of the statement made today by the Minister of Transport. I am just asking the Minister whether he can give the House the assurance that the Quebec Farm Producers' Union will be able to set aside its concern as a result of this announcement or whether the Government did not bother to consult the Quebec Farmers' Association before making this statement?

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Minister of State for Economic Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I certainly do hope that today's announcement will lay to rest all previous concern. However, I may add that steps have been taken to reassure Quebec farmers, and that the Canadian Livestock Board is there to monitor the new policy. As I said before, independent studies have been made which gave us the assurance that there is no problem, that no markets and no incomes will be lost, and so on. In any case, we have taken steps to set up a monitoring mechanism to determine exactly what the effects will be, not only in Quebec but also in the Atlantic Provinces.

* * *

[English]

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

CHRYSLER CORPORATION—MINISTER'S NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. For the last few months he has purportedly been doing battle with Canadian Chrysler Corporation, only to wring out of them a lot of hollow promises and no action. Today he is reported to have said that he will begin to play hard ball with