

Oral Questions

degree of confidence that our Government fully recognizes the difficult situation in which Canadian agriculture finds itself.

● (1500)

Again I remind the Hon. Member that coming out of the March 5 meeting were a commitment and statement that were made not unilaterally on the part of the Government but rather jointly with the farm leadership of Canada. That statement indicated that farmers should plan their 1987 cropping patterns based on market signals rather than on the thought that the Government would be forthcoming with the same level of support, and perhaps more importantly, that the Government would be forthcoming with the same distribution formula.

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EXTERNAL AID**EARTHQUAKE IN ECUADOR—CANADIAN ASSISTANCE**

Mr. John Oostrom (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for External Relations. Recently Ecuador was hit with a severe earthquake which devastated the national economy. The more than 70,000 Ecuadorians living in Metro-Toronto have been raising funds for these victims. Is Canada monitoring the conditions in Ecuador in order to ascertain if more assistance is needed? Has the Government of Ecuador actually asked Canada for more assistance?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Landry (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to my hon. friend for his question. As all other Canadians generally, government Members have been deeply affected by this disaster and enormously sympathize with the people from Ecuador. Canada has effectively received from the Red Cross and the Panamerican Health Organization a request for help, and we have immediately responded by contributing \$150,000. I can tell my hon. friend that we have been advised by the Red Cross that the emergency needs have been met and that the reconstruction phase is now under way. Also, we have CIDA agents there who are monitoring the situation very closely. Canada is eager to respond to the various requests received from organizations helping this country recover.

[*English*]

AGRICULTURE**TRIPARTITE SUGAR BEET STABILIZATION PLAN—EFFECT ON MANITOBA**

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Was the Deputy Prime Minister aware that when the Government decided to proceed unilaterally with tripartite stabilization for sugar beet producers, the decision would prevent the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board from fulfilling his 1985 commitment to the Province of Manitoba that the province would not be asked to support the sugar beet industry beyond the 1985 crop year? Was this done knowingly or by accident?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member should know, if he has had full contact with his NDP colleagues in Manitoba, that the federal Government cannot unilaterally impose any kind of a tripartite stabilization on any province that will participate, including the Province of Manitoba. He should know that Manitoba did participate in some of the discussions that led up to a proposal being made by the federal Government. That proposal has been accepted by the Province of Alberta. The only people who are holding out are the representatives of the Government of Manitoba and that is a very tragic situation.

When the federal Government was offering support to see the industry survive, the people from the Government of the Province of Alberta and everyone else except the Government of Manitoba accepted. That is a shame to agriculture in Canada.

TELEX MESSAGE SENT TO MANITOBA IN 1985

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister in charge of the Wheat Board chose to answer, I would ask him if he did or if he did not send a Telex or make a commitment in writing to the Province of Manitoba in 1985 telling the province that it would not be required or asked to support the sugar beet industry beyond 1985, the one year when Manitoba supported the industry in the West while no one else planted sugar?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, that Telex was sent, but the Hon. Member will also know that a Bill was passed in the House of Commons in June, 1985, establishing a tripartite policy. That policy has been implemented in the case of the hog industry in Manitoba, so the Province of Manitoba has already entered into tripartite stabilization on behalf of agriculture.

The other thing the Hon. Member should know is that the Province of Manitoba's total agriculture budget is in the neighbourhood of \$80 million. He should know as well that the Government of Canada this year will spend approximately seven times that total amount on agriculture in Manitoba. It is