

*Oral Questions***AGRICULTURE****DROUGHT IN WESTERN CANADA—MEETING OF FEDERAL-
PROVINCIAL MINISTERS**

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Last week in the House the Prime Minister indicated to my colleague, the Hon. Member for Humboldt—Lake Centre, that the Minister of Agriculture would be meeting on an urgent basis with his western counterparts regarding the drought.

Has the Minister personally been in contact with any or all of the western agricultural Ministers to discuss special federal drought assistance? If so, can he tell the House when he will be meeting with them and when we can expect the details of a relief program?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member knows that we are in constant contact with our provincial counterparts as well as at the Deputy Minister level. If the meeting date is suitable to all provincial counterparts we have arranged a meeting a week from today hopefully in Calgary.

REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, not knowing if or when support will be available causes the greatest stress to farmers and cattlemen. Can the Minister give us some assurance that funds will be available, and that the conservation funds which are totally inadequate will not be the basis of any help or relief program?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I think that if one wants to be fair one should examine the record of this Government with respect to initiatives taken on behalf of the agricultural industry. This should be done not only on a day-to-day basis. For example, our budget increased by 400 per cent. That speaks for itself. There were some 585 initiatives delivering over \$9 billion, which I think speaks for itself. That is on an ongoing basis. Unfortunately we have had some experience with adverse weather conditions. We responded in 1984. We responded in 1985. There is no question about—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

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TRADE**CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—HIRING OF
JOHN LASCHINGER**

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. It also concerns the John Laschinger sweetheart deal.

● (1450)

The Deputy Prime Minister will know that no less than \$12.7 million was spent on free trade brochures, pamphlets and so on, much of which ended up as toilet paper.

How can the Deputy Prime Minister justify hiring Mr. John Laschinger, a Conservative Party organizer, cheered in this House by Tory Members of Parliament? Can he tell us how many other Tory hacks, flacks and bagmen will benefit from the Government's sweetheart deal?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, that question hardly deserves the dignity of an answer, but I will take it as notice and ask the Hon. Minister for International Trade to respond when he is in the House.

[Translation]

FORTHCOMING ELECTION CAMPAIGN—REQUEST THAT JOHN LASCHINGER NOT SERVE PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the Deputy Prime Minister and his Government which has launched a free trade campaign directed by John Laschinger, former campaign manager for the Minister responsible for International Trade. Will the Deputy Prime Minister give the House the assurance that Mr. Laschinger will not be working for the Conservative Party during the next election campaign, because Canadians want to have the assurance that taxpayers' money will not be used for the Conservative Party? Could he give us that assurance right away?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I think that is the same question in the other official language and the same answer applies.

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[Translation]

INDIAN AFFAIRS**BUILDING OF SCHOOL FOR CREE CHILDREN OF WASANIPI—
MINISTER'S POSITION**

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Further to my question of November 30 in this House and to several meetings held by Canada's negotiators with the Waswanipi Cree of Abitibi under the James Bay Agreement, about the urgent need to build a school, could the Minister confirm today whether the Government of Canada will share, with the Government of Quebec, the cost of building a school for Cree children in Waswanipi?