

Oral Questions

intends to reverse his position and maintain at the current level the amount to be paid for social housing?

[English]

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the hon. member be somewhat patient. The Minister of Finance has the representations and has had them for quite some time.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec-Est, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would have expected a better answer from the minister who has nevertheless found \$600,000 to build a brick wall in his honour in his riding.

Are we to understand that, by virtue of this measure which serves to increase requirements made of individuals in social housing, the federal government would once again download the burden of its deficit onto the backs of the most destitute and that the 110,000 affected households in Quebec can expect nothing further from this federal government?

[English]

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in terms of the premise of the hon. member's question, I disagree totally. Perhaps he could be a little more patient. His answer will come later this afternoon.

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HEALTH

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Krever inquiry has just tabled its interim report. It has some very specific recommendations on how to decrease the amount of AIDS in our country. Since lives could be saved, will the health minister move quickly to implement those recommendations?

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member will understand that we have made the report public. We are funding the Krever commission. We are very interested in taking whatever actions are necessary. The member must remember that there are other players in the blood supply system, including the provincial governments, the Canadian Red Cross, and other partners. They are also taking this very seriously.

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, there is some degree of inconsistency in this minister's response. On the issue of testing for AIDS for immigrants, the minister said no. Since this particular issue will save lives, I simply ask: Will the minister take haste to look after these recommendations?

• (1450)

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have taken haste and we have not waited for the recommendations to take action. Many of the recommendations have already been acted on. We will take action on any others that are within our responsibilities.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa.

In Pakistan, Salam Masih, 14, and his uncle Rehmat were convicted to die for writing anti-Islamic slogans on a mosque wall. I am pleased to hear that the conviction was overturned by the high court.

What action has the secretary of state taken on behalf of the Government of Canada to ensure that human rights of minorities are protected in Pakistan?

Hon. Christine Stewart (Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is very pleased, as is my colleague, that the appeal court overturned the conviction and execution of Salam Masih and his uncle in Pakistan. We believe it was in part due to our government's representations to the Government of Pakistan, along with representations by other members of the international community.

We remain very concerned about the human rights abuses particularly as they are brought against religious minorities in Pakistan. We will continue to work with the Government of Pakistan along with the NGO community to correct this.

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TRADE

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

As part of the Prime Minister's promise on February 14 to this House, would the Prime Minister please inform Parliament as to the outcome of his discussions with President Clinton regarding the American restrictions on Canadian sugar and products containing sugar?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was asked by many members on this side to raise that question with the President of the United States. I mentioned it to him and made it very clear that in our view there was no problem at all. It is an area where there is a perfect balance of trade. There is no surplus on either side. Therefore, we do not understand why the United States would like to undo what is working very well at this moment.