

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I wish to assure the hon. member that all the arrangements for my trip to Israel, which was an official visit at the invitation of the government of Israel, were made by the Israeli embassy.

Mr. Stevens: In view of the fact it was publicly reported on Thursday by the counsellor of the Israeli embassy that the embassy had not arranged the Distillers Corporation plane trip and that aides in the minister's office have said that Mr. Bronfman had invited the minister to accompany him on a trip to Israel, did the minister ever question why that plane should be used and did he inquire into whether alternative Canadian government or commercial airline transportation was available?

Mr. Lalonde: Mr. Speaker, I am advised that the aides in my office never made such a statement. A communication was made with the journalist who printed such a piece of news. No such statement was made by my aides. As far as the arrangements for the trip were concerned, I said they were made by the Israeli embassy and I relied on the arrangements made by them.

Mr. Stevens: Has the minister inquired as to whether Seagrams charged the government of Israel for the use of the jet plane used on the visit? If that has not been done, has the minister arranged to pay for his and his wife's passage?

Mr. Lalonde: No, Mr. Speaker, I have not inquired about this. It is obviously a matter to be settled between the government of Israel and the owners of the private plane concerned. I might remind the hon. member that the Israeli ambassador also travelled with me on this trip.

USE BY MINISTERS OF PRIVATE AIRCRAFT ON OFFICIAL VISITS—ESTABLISHMENT OF GUIDELINES

Mr. Joe Clark (Rocky Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question for clarification. Did I understand the minister to say this was an official visit by the minister in a private aircraft? If that is the case, I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether it is now going to be the practice of the government of Canada to have official trips taken in private aircraft?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain): This might not seem important to members opposite, but it is very important to us and the people of this country. If it is going to be the intention to have trips of this kind made by ministers in private aircraft on an official basis, does the Prime Minister intend to issue any kind of guidelines that should be followed by ministers in subsequent situations of this kind.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, that is not going to be the government practice. Indeed, I would very firmly want that it be the contrary of government practice. There may be certain exceptions such as the one we have heard about when a trip is arranged by the host government. Even in those circumstances, it might be wise to inform one's self in advance as

Oral Questions

to the means of transportation. As a general principle, however, there are guidelines that ministers travel at the expense of the government of Canada or at the expense of a particular department.

Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain): How then does the Prime Minister distinguish the trip that has just been made on the Bronfman jet, apparently for official reasons, by the minister whose jurisdiction includes responsibility for implementation of the LeDain Commission with its recommendations regarding alcohol, advertising and this sort of thing, from the general indication he has given that the government will not approve trips of this sort in private aircraft?

● (1420)

Mr. Trudeau: I believe I gave an answer to that when I was first asked the question a month ago. I was not aware of the nature of the transportation the minister was taking. From what I understand, he accepted the invitation in good faith. I think the conclusion we should draw as a government is that in future when we accept invitations we shall also ask ourselves how we are being conveyed to the place to which we are invited.

* * *

[Translation]

MANPOWER

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—SUGGESTED INCREASE IN NUMBER OF PROJECTS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, in view of the absence of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, I shall put my question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

In view of the many lay-offs in the lumber industry in northwest Quebec and elsewhere in Canada, does the government intend to increase its grants to LIP so that more of these projects may be approved this fall thus permitting us to fight unemployment in that sector?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the government is always pleased to note that the public as well as the opposition approve LIP projects. As for the hon. member's representation, I shall acquaint the minister with it and if he has to make any statement he will do so.

* * *

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE IN ROME—CANADIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROPOSED TRADE AND COMMODITY AGREEMENTS

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It relates to the on-going World Food Conference in Rome from which the minister has just returned. Bearing in mind the statement by the President of Mexico, Sr. Echeverria, stressing the importance of trade and commodity agreements to the less developed countries, what