

Oral Questions

fact that documents I have right here in my hand say that such is not the case, will the Minister rise in the House of Commons to admit that his answer of yesterday was incorrect? Will he instead replace the words he used by saying that this system will shoot down anything that can fly in any weather providing it is not snowy, rainy, cloudy, or hazy outside?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member has been a busy boy for the last 24 hours going through these documents. I have the same document as the Hon. Member has. If he will look at the page, he will see that there are two elements to the Low Level Air Defence system, one of which is the ADATS missile and the other of which is the Skyguard gun. The Skyguard gun works in all weather. The system is all-weather operational. It is capable of shooting down anything that can fly in any weather, including the Hon. Member.

EXPRESSIONS OF DISAGREEMENT

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence. He will know that the range of the gun is about four kilometres. The Minister's answers yesterday indicated that he wishes to treat concerns about the capability of our Low Level Air Defence system very lightly. It will be no joking matter if this system fails our troops in the field when it is needed most, regardless of weather.

Again, how does the Minister explain Ministers disagreeing with each other, officials disagreeing with each other, and Ministers disagreeing with officials? Who is right? The only reason this is a controversy is because we are hearing all kinds of different answers.

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member raises the question of whether or not there is any disagreement as to whether it is an all-weather operational system. It is an all-weather operational system. It meets every element of the standards set in the request for proposals, as was fully explained to the Hon. Member in the briefing he received from DND.

The Hon. Member will be aware of the fact that tomorrow the Department of National Defence is offering for all members of the Defence Committee of the House of Commons yet another briefing. I understand the Hon. Member will be present representing his Party, and officials of the Department of National Defence will be delighted to take the Hon. Member step by step through every element of this to demonstrate to him that it is all-weather capable.

[Translation]

TRADE

MARKETING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS—IMPACT OF FREE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. A senior American official, Daniel Amstutz, stated yesterday that the United States wanted basic changes in the operation of our farm marketing agencies. Can the Minister assure the House that no aspect of the operation of those agencies will be involved in the free trade negotiations?

[English]

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Member's question as it provides me with the opportunity to respond. I wish to begin my response by saying that the story to which the Hon. Member referred is a complete misrepresentation of the facts. We recognize, and it has been stated in the House by myself and by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, that of course marketing systems are part of the Canadian fabric. They have been designed and put together in close consultation with all sectors of the industry. They have worked well for producers, processors, and Canadian consumers.

REQUEST THAT MARKETING BOARDS BE PROTECTED

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, given that the SAGIT subcommittee on Marketing Boards has said that these boards should not be touched and that the marketing boards themselves are legal under GATT, will the Minister resist this latest attack on important Canadian institutions by directly communicating with the United States, indicating to the Americans that these will not be put on the bargaining table and that the functioning of these boards will be protected?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member referred to the SAGIT committee. He also referred to the position and recommendations conveyed to the chief trade negotiator on behalf of the SAGIT group. I agree wholeheartedly with the recommendations of the membership of the SAGIT group.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to advise the House that this will be the last question for Question Period. The Hon. Member for Saint-Denis.