

HEALTH

REQUEST FOR INCREASED FUNDS FOR RESEARCH INTO
DIABETES

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Because the government introduced an austerity program, the minister cut back on funds for research projects. I suppose people in all fields of research ask for special attention. I am particularly concerned about research projects to do with diabetes and the production of insulin. In view of Canada's enviable reputation in this field, will the minister reconsider what he is to allocate to this particular field of research, and fund it as it deserves to be funded?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I should like to tell the hon. member first of all that with regard to production of insulin, I am told that the production in Canada is quite adequate to meet present needs.

As for the allotment of funds for research, in the field specifically mentioned by the hon. member, I must say that admittedly that field is very important. I would remind the hon. member, however, that I am not the one who decides on how those funds are shared among the various branches of medical research. I am not the one, as minister, nor are the officials of my department, the ones who divide them up. The funds are allotted by an autonomous and independent body known as the Medical Research Council whose decisions in the field of medical research are taken by experts and not by myself.

[English]

REQUEST FOR FUNDS FOR INVESTIGATION OF ACUPUNCTURE

Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Will the minister recommend to the appropriate committee which deals with the allocation of funds to medical research that more funds should be made available for investigation of acupuncture treatment?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I shall draw the hon. member's representation to the attention of the Medical Research Council. The Medical Research Council receives *Hansard* and I am sure they will note the hon. member's representation. That is all I can do, I think, about the hon. member's question.

* * *

AIR TRANSPORT

SUGGESTED INQUIRY INTO SAFETY ASPECTS OF USE OF
BILINGUAL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Transport in connection with air safety? As there is a great deal of uncertainty and concern these days about the role of air traffic controllers

Oral Questions

and as the minister replied the other day, as reported on page 13200 of *Hansard*, to this effect:

... I should like to show the hon. member that we are not at all hesitant about any kind of examination of our procedures in regard to air traffic control and the safety involved.

Is the minister prepared to recommend an examination of the technical aspects of air safety and the cost to the travellers? I ask this because of the additional costs air lines will need to absorb because of some movement in this country with regard to the linguistic re-allocation of air traffic controllers.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises two separate and distinct issues, possible additional costs and the nature of additional procedures which may be involved. I think this involves broad policy which must be judged in terms of balance of interests, or in terms of the kind of judgment made by this House when it showed widespread support for the official languages policy. On the issue of safety, however, I assure hon. members, as I have assured them many times in the past, that we are dedicated to the introduction of safe techniques and procedures before we introduce bilingual air traffic control in Quebec, in the field of instrument flight rules. We have undertaken research and development in this field with our simulator. Actually, the program got under way yesterday.

Mr. Horner: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Am I to gather from the minister's reply that the department and the minister do not favour allowing this highly technical subject to be examined by a competent committee?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, that, precisely, is what we are doing.

Mr. Horner: I am talking about an independent committee.

Mr. Lang: We have the co-operation of the various air line associations and groups representing pilots and controllers. They are working, with the simulator, in the development of procedures. The question of a specific additional inquiry is being discussed in another context these days. As I said earlier in the House, I have no hesitation with regard to any kind of examination of techniques and procedures we shall be using. We shall be satisfied and I am sure that those involved in the program will also be satisfied that we have evolved safe procedures.

* * *

[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

POSSIBILITY OF SENDING HELP TO EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS IN
ITALY

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Yesterday, a tragedy occurred in northern Italy where an earthquake struck. As tens of thousands of Canadians come from this area, can the parliamentary secretary tell the House whether a report has been submitted to her on