

Oral Questions

help the cause of peace in countries throughout the world. Here again, we will continue to apply pressure so that peace talks can be resumed and this carnage, which we all deplore as Canadians and as free citizens, will be stopped as soon as possible.

[*English*]

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the two ministers responsible for immigration, I direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister. It concerns the deteriorating situation in El Salvador.

The Deputy Prime Minister is fully aware that fighting has certainly reached new heights in that country and that the recent brutal killings of innocent people, including civilians and religious leaders, has gripped that country, put it into a state of panic, fear and uncertainty.

I therefore ask the Deputy Prime Minister: In light of these new circumstances in El Salvador, will the government put into force an immediate moratorium like it has for Lebanon and China on the deportation of refugee claimants back to El Salvador until and at least a state of normalcy returns to that country? Will the Deputy Prime Minister give the House that undertaking?

Mr. Bill Kempling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the government has in place a generous and effective refugee determination system and at the present time 99 per cent of all El Salvadorans seeking refugee status in Canada are accepted as refugees.

Before the other 1 per cent would be removed from the country, their cases would be reviewed by senior immigration officials at national headquarters. If they cannot come to a clear decision, the minister herself will look at the case.

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Speaker, I regret that answer because the member seems to be saying: "Well, if there is only 1 per cent that are returned, so what, because we have already accepted another percentage".

Some Hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Bouchard (Roberval): That's not what he said.

Mr. Marchi: Perhaps I could direct my question to the Minister for External Relations who just responded to a question by the leader of the New Democratic Party pertaining to that part of the world.

Could the minister explain to us therefore why she believes and why she deems, according to this government, that El Salvador is safe for claimants to be returned?

Mr. Shields: Who said that?

Mr. Marchi: I believe that they are not proper and judicious statements in terms of China and in Lebanon, and I believe that the same standards of a moratorium on deportations should be applied equally to El Salvador.

Could she give us reassurance on why she feels it is "safe" to do a case by case review rather than impose an immediate foolproof moratorium?

Mr. Kempling: Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether the hon. gentleman cannot hear properly, but 99 per cent is 99 per cent. They stay here; they stay here. As I said, 99 per cent is 99 per cent. They stay here.

Mr. Marchi: But one is too many.

Mr. Kempling: The other 1 per cent is reviewed, and under no circumstances will they be sent back to El Salvador—

Mr. Marchi: Eight have been returned already.

Mr. Kempling: —while existing conditions continue.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

Farmers across the country are rallying against the policies of this government. Tomorrow thousands and thousands of farmers from Quebec and Ontario will be rallying to protest here on the Hill.

Last week the president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Garf Stevenson, called on the government to live up to the promises of the Prime Minister in December 1987 that as long as the trade war between the EEC and the United States continued the Government of Canada would continue to provide support to those farmers, and he called on the Government of Canada to provide some \$500 million worth of support during this winter to assist western farmers.

Is the Deputy Prime Minister willing to make a commitment today that the Prime Minister's commitment back in December 1987 will be honoured and that