

Political uncertainty also affects the dollar. The problems in the Soviet Union, the Middle East and elsewhere have meant increased demand for safe haven currencies. This has produced a shift by the European and Asian investors into the North American market.

While the exchange rate does affect our competitiveness, the root cause of the deterioration in our competitiveness, is the more rapid increase in wage costs and the slower increase in productivity in Canada than in our major trading partners.

Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova): A zero per cent increase.

Mr. James: Lasting improvements in our competitiveness can only come through improving productivity and controlling domestic costs. Attempting to improve our competitiveness by lowering the dollar through inflationary monetary policy would provide at best temporary gains and would be ultimately self-defeating.

• (1810)

MEME BREAST IMPLANTS

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, on September 26 I rose in the House and asked the Minister of National Health and Welfare if he would require manufacturers of breast implants to provide information to breast implant patients just as the American food and drug administration was doing in the United States.

The other thing I raised was that the deputy minister had stated publicly it was not necessary. The minister in responding said he was informed the day before by the deputy minister about the U.S. directive to the implant makers and he said he would ask the same thing of makers of implants sold in Canada.

In a supplementary question I asked the minister if he would also do something about the booklet that had been produced and which the minister referred to in his first answer about breast implants by the breast implant industry, the Canadian Quebec Association of Plastic Surgeons, the Canadian Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery and the government. It stressed two things.

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First, the booklet was not totally clear. It was a whitewash of the whole question of implants. Second, in our view it was inappropriate that the industry should be involved in the production of this booklet.

The minister responded by saying that he looked forward to me agreeing with him that the information should be provided. I had already agreed with him on this. He went on to say that he felt it was important that information be provided to women regarding breast implants.

It is now December. I have had a letter from the minister saying that he intends to revise the booklet. I have asked that the booklet be revised in plain, understandable language for women who are considering breast implants, whether for cosmetic reasons or for post-mastectomy reasons.

It is very important to point out that the booklet the minister is planning on revising does not tell women about the life expectancy of implants. It does not tell women about the pain associated with the surgery for breast implants. Women are not advised of known side effects for implants. They are definitely not told in that booklet that there is a growing body of evidence that links silicone implants with possible auto-immune disease. There is definitely no information outlining to those women who have had cosmetic implants that discusses any of the concerns they might have regarding childbearing and nursing after the child is born.

The ministry has not written that booklet. I am urging that when the ministry does write a booklet it include these very important points. It must be written independent of the plastic surgery industry.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Forestry): Madam Speaker, the Department of National Health and Welfare has been in the forefront of providing patient information concerning breast implants for more than three years now. The department, in co-operation with plastic surgeons' associations, published a booklet on breast augmentation. This booklet is widely used by plastic surgeons and serves, in addition to the information provided verbally, to give