

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I will check again to ensure that independent researchers have indeed assessed the study on which the government based its restriction on the sale of saccharin. I know for a fact, however, that the United States congress Office of Technological Assessment has evaluated the Canadian study and concluded that it was valid.

As to the deep concern of the hon. member about diabetics, to which she did not refer to today but which is known to this House and for which I would like to commend her, I would like to add that I will do my utmost to encourage the efforts of the industrial research sectors in Canada to produce acceptable replacement sweeteners.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

NEED TO CREATE INVESTOR CONFIDENCE

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Since 1977 was the fifth consecutive year in which there was a net outflow of direct investment capital from Canada, when does the minister propose to create a climate of investor confidence so that Canadian jobs, wealth and output may be protected?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not quite understand what the hon. member means. We are trying to create the most favourable climate, and I think the hon. member could help in this regard if the opposition would stop spreading all kinds of rumours exaggerating the deficits or cash requirements of the federal government. If the opposition were a bit more responsible, things might improve somewhat. I am told—

[English]

Mr. Stevens: You confirmed the deficit.

Mr. Chrétien: I am glad that the Leader of the Opposition decided to bring someone into his party to replace the hon. member for York-Simcoe as financial critic.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McKenzie: We do not have to spread any rumours; the outflow of capital is referred to daily in the newspapers. It is the uncertainty caused by the federal government, and not the unity question, that is driving business and investment out of Canada and creating record unemployment. Are we to rely completely on government make-work projects as the only hope for future jobs for the over one million unemployed in Canada?

● (1142)

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, in spite of what the hon. member says, the question of national unity is one of the problems. Last week the Treasurer of Ontario, Mr.

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McKeough, said that the reduction of the Canadian dollar to the level it is at now was caused 40 per cent by the political insecurity. I invite the hon. member to read the speech of Mr. McKeough on that topic.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON LEGALIZATION OF MARIJUANA

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice. In view of the fact that the last Liberal convention passed a resolution in favour of the legalization of marijuana, and that last August the Minister of Justice stated that he would declassify marijuana from the Criminal Code to the Food and Drugs Act, would the Minister of Justice state to Canadians what the government's policy is on this very important matter?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I stated earlier that the Minister of National Health and Welfare, the Solicitor General and I have studied Bill S-19 to determine what amendments should be made to that bill, toward its introduction. I am not sure whether it is deliberate or not, but the hon. member has put me in some difficulty. I am aware the Prime Minister made a statement on this matter yesterday. Because of other events this morning, I have not had an opportunity of reading his comments. Therefore, I think the question should be directed more properly to the Prime Minister.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, I will direct the same question to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the last Liberal convention passed a resolution in favour of the legalization of marijuana, and that last August the Minister of Justice stated that he would declassify marijuana from the Criminal Code to the Food and Drugs Act, would the Prime Minister state the policy of the government on this very important matter?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we made that policy very clear when we introduced a bill in the Senate, which was passed in its amended form by the Senate. That represents the policy of the government. We would gladly introduce it and pass it through the House if we could have unanimous consent to do so in half a day.

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POST OFFICE

CEILING ON MAIL DELIVERY CONTRACTS

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Postmaster General. In view of the discrimination against rural mailmen who are threatened with the loss of their jobs by the \$10,000 ceiling on contracts, notwithstanding their substantial investment in transportation