

Oral Questions

a Government, that the affairs, as they are developing in South America, are domestic in that international sense. What I did say referred to the last part of the Hon. Member's question when he was speaking about a vote of the Congress in the United States. That is a domestic affair. We are just as vitally concerned about political and military unrest in any South American country, indeed, around the world, as he is.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, what really is domestic is what goes on in Nicaragua, and the President of the United States should understand that it is a domestic matter and that he should keep his nose out.

FUNDING OF MILITARY ACTIVITY AGAINST NICARAGUA

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Following what the Deputy Prime Minister has now said, which is to clarify the position of the Government of Canada, namely, that we presumably would oppose any escalation of military activity in that region or anywhere else, and since the Deputy Prime Minister has said that, and since an important—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is becoming a very long preamble. Is there a question?

Mr. Broadbent: Given the importance of this issue to world peace, would the Government of Canada now make its views publicly known that it opposes the funding of military activity directed against the existing Government of Nicaragua?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the position of the Government has been made abundantly clear on more than one occasion. However, just to refresh the memory of the hon. gentleman, let me quote from *Hansard* of March 13, 1986. In reply to the Hon. Member's own critic, the Secretary of State for External Affairs had this to say, and I quote from page 11515:

We have contributed constructively to the Contadora process. We have discussed the possibility of contributing constructively to the resolution of border disputes. We intend to take an active role in working to bring peace and stability and—"

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The answer is too long.

● (1425)

CANADIAN POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, since the Government will not criticize the proposed action, will the Deputy Prime Minister confirm whether or not it is the Government's view that the proposed action by the President of the United States constitutes a violation of international law?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I do not purport to provide legal advice with respect to international law to the hon. gentleman on the floor of the House of Commons.

CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS

LICENSING OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs who, on Friday, told a coalition of groups representing consumers, senior citizens, women and labour that, as a concession to the United States, his Government will repeal our present law on compulsory licensing of prescription drugs, a law which saves consumers some \$200 million a year. Will the Government be repealing this law? If so, how will it protect Canadians against higher drug prices if this law is changed?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Canada Post): Mr. Speaker, I would like to answer quite simply that we are concluding our consultation process. As soon as the Government has considered the various views that were expressed, we will submit a decision to Cabinet for consideration, and as soon as it is ratified, we will make an announcement in the House.

[English]

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister not say now whether the Government will change the law? If so, will he limit any changes to those recommended in the Eastman Report, since those recommendations, according to Mr. Eastman, will protect both consumers, something which is important, and the industry?

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Canada Post): Mr. Speaker, I have said many times that whatever the policy will be it will not be carried out on the backs of the consumers but we will ensure that it creates jobs and brings investment to Canada.

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ENERGY

PRICE OF CRUDE OIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources who will know that just a few hours ago the Saudi oil Minister said that oil prices could conceivably move to \$8 a barrel in the months ahead. Recognizing the crisis situation which is now developing in the West, particularly in the Province of Alberta where there have been hundreds of lay-offs and where there is a potential for thousands, will the Minister explain to us what she plans to do? What policy does the Government have to come to the rescue of this ailing industry and the thousands of people who face impending lay-offs?

Mr. McDermid: What a bunch of hypocrites!