

*Oral Questions*

established in such a way as to be the most conducive toward the growth and development of agriculture throughout Canada.

I believe that the other important term of reference is that the method of payment should not provide for an unfair or disproportionate advantage to sectors of western agriculture relative to other regions of agriculture in Canada. I think it is within that framework that the recommendations have been put forth.

● (1440)

The Hon. Member may want to engage in debate on certain aspects or elements of this very important report and this very important issue, but I would remind him that what we are asking and seeking is a full comprehensive discussion on the pros and cons of this issue. I think, because it was put in the context it was under the Inquiries Act, it merits worthy consideration.

## DIRECT PAYMENTS TO FARMERS—UNITED STATES REACTION

**Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, will the Minister recognize that direct payment to farmers could only be construed by the United States as a subsidy to agriculture? The payment to the railways was at least defensible in that they, the Americans also subsidize their canal and river systems and we could be doing similar things. How do we defend ourselves when we are doing this, given the action that the U.S. has taken?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, this particular proposal would apply both to domestic and export grain, and again, as I said, this is one element of the debate. I am sure the Hon. Member will have lots of opportunity to put forth his views and those of his Party. He certainly is entitled to his opinion. I welcome the fact that he is expressing his opinion, as I will welcome all other people who have a view and an opinion on this very important and sensitive issue.

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## EXTERNAL AID

## ETHIOPIA—REPORTED BURNING OF FAMINE RELIEF CAMP

**Mr. Reg Stackhouse (Scarborough West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of External Relations. According to a report in the *Washington Post*, the Ethiopian army, equipped with Soviet made helicopters, burned and evacuated by force a large Ethiopian famine relief camp which was operated by reputable organizations, including World Vision and the International Red Cross.

What representations will the Canadian Government make to ensure that the hapless 52,500 refugees left without water or medical treatment, and forced to walk hundreds of miles, although thousands of them are under five years of age, will receive adequate care and that Canadian assisted centres will

not suddenly be closed down in the same ruthless manner? Irish relief workers at the camp fear that one-half of the walking refugees will perish.

[Translation]

**Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister for External Relations):** Mr. Speaker, we have contacted our ambassador in Addis Ababa and, apparently, the reports are probably accurate. We have asked the ambassador to do whatever is necessary to meet with Ethiopian authorities, but it was impossible because May 1 is a statutory holiday in Ethiopia.

As soon as we get more information, we will be in a position to confirm to the House that we continue to help the people involved.

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[English]

## PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS

## FREEDOM OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATION IN ONTARIO

**Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker.

**An Hon. Member:** Wow!

**Mr. Hopkins:** We all know by now the practice of deceit and of broken promises on the part of the federal Conservative Government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Shame.

**Mr. Hopkins:** We now have a provincial Tory Government resorting to threats and intimidation of the Ontario electorate. I refer you to the statement by the Premier of Ontario that only Tory held seats will be favoured by that Government if elected, God forbid.

In the light of such a statement will the Deputy Prime Minister instruct federal government lawyers to investigate whether such a practice does contravene our Charter of Rights which allows all Canadians, including the Ontario electorate, the fundamental freedom of political association without fear of discrimination? This certainly shows how worn out the Tory organization is in the Province of Ontario.

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, obviously it will be polling day tomorrow in the Province of Ontario judging from the allegations that are being made by the Liberal Party across the way. When the Hon. Member speaks of deceit of a political Party, he certainly should know what he is talking about, sitting where he is.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Nielsen:** I do not accept his allegations for a moment. Indeed, I think the people of Ontario can expect more of the