

Oral Questions

We think the offer is reasonable. Everyone is accepting it except the Province of Manitoba. I urge the Hon. Member to do something with his cohorts in Manitoba in order that we can get away from this unfortunate position.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, the Minister did not answer the question. He knows that the Manitoba Government has made some concessions. It has offered to continue contributing what it began to contribute in 1985.

DEFICIT SHARING—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, I want the Minister to address the question of deficit sharing which is clearly the most unreasonable demand the Minister is making of the Manitoba Government. Why is he insisting on that and, in so doing, putting at risk the sugar-beet industry in Manitoba?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, no one except the NDP Government in Manitoba thinks it is an unreasonable offer. The Province of Alberta would have signed this agreement over a year ago and will sign it tomorrow. As I said, no one except the NDP in Manitoba thinks it is unreasonable. It is very, very unfortunate that the NDP in Manitoba chooses this issue simply to attack the federal Government.

I concur with the comment in the *Winnipeg Free Press* that it is unfortunate that the NDP in Manitoba is using this as "an excellent opportunity to do some Ottawa bashing while saving a relatively small amount of money" at the expense of a very important industry to Manitoba producers. That is a very serious situation and we are trying to do what we can to break the log jam, as I said yesterday.

Mr. Murphy: You make a promise and you don't keep it. Your word is not worth a damn thing in Manitoba. Not worth a thing.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Ed, make a phone call. Make him shape up.

Mr. Garneau: There is no discipline there.

An Hon. Member: Show respect.

* * *

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

DEATH OF CANADIAN REPORTER IN LIBYA

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and is with regard to the tragic death of Southam reporter Christoph Lehmann-Halens in Libya yesterday under

most peculiar circumstances. JANA, the official news agency for Libya, made the outrageous statement that Mr. Lehmann-Halens "committed suicide under the effects of what he saw of the damage caused by the American aggression".

We know the Government sent an envoy to Tripoli yesterday. Can the Minister tell the House what really happened? Can he inform us what has been determined by his Department as to the real cause of death of Mr. Lehmann-Halens?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all Members of the House share my regret and that of the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier at the death of Mr. Lehmann-Halens in Tripoli. The member is correct that I have dispatched a consular official from Rome who is now in Tripoli and is carrying out investigations and conversations with authorities of that country and with other diplomatic authorities. I do not yet have a report from that consular official but, knowing the Hon. Member's interest, I will make that information available to him as soon as I have it.

REQUEST THAT SECOND INDEPENDENT AUTOPSY BE CONDUCTED

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, we share the Minister's sympathy for the family. Will he advise the family that they can indeed assist the inquiry by requesting that a second autopsy be done by a third party independent of Libya to establish the real cause of death?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly consider doing that. I will report to the Hon. Member any responses which may result.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

TIMING OF ANNOUNCEMENT OF INITIAL GRAIN PRICES

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board. He is aware that there is a considerable amount of confusion among western grain producers because no announcement has been made with regard to initial grain prices. We understand that the Minister has made a recommendation to the Cabinet. Can he tell us whether he or the Government intends to announce the initial prices today or this week?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question. We are well along in the decision-making process and will probably be in a position to announce initial payments next week.