

*Oral Questions*

At that time, we made our objections clearly known to the United States government. Since then the administration has questioned the terms of the bill in such a way as to suggest it will not go forward in the way that was first anticipated.

On the more specific question the member raises, I have asked our embassy in Washington to inform us of the details of the U.S. treasury's proposed action. We do not have all the details yet. However, I can assure the member opposite we will do everything to make certain Canadian companies have the full opportunity to participate, as they are now doing, in the Cuban economy.

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is reassuring to know we do not have Jesse Helms setting Canadian trade policy. However Canadian companies like Lantic, Redpath and B.C. Sugar may be targeted as early as tomorrow because they buy raw sugar from Cuba.

What is the minister doing to protect these interests today? These are interests that have to be looked after at this very moment.

**Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, we do not have the details and certainly not details on the supposed action that might be taken against Canadian sugar companies in the context that the member mentions.

Our present concern is to ascertain the possible action the U.S. treasury might take against four Cuban Canadian joint ventures led by the Sherritt company. In that instance, we are seeking further information. I hope that I shall have more information I can provide the member in due course.

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• (1455)

[Translation]

### BOVINE SOMATOTROPIN

**Mr. Jean Landry (Lotbinière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

According to an Angus Reid survey, three out of four consumers are concerned about the use of BST. Even the dairy industry is against it. The Dairy Council, which represents processors, rejects this product, deeming it unnecessary and undesirable, while dairy producers have demanded that the minister extend the moratorium.

Does the minister admit that neither the dairy industry nor consumers want BST on the market and that they all want the moratorium to be extended?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when concerns were first raised

about the potential use of rBST, a synthetic product, in the spring of last year, the House of Commons agriculture committee undertook a very useful examination of a number of issues surrounding that question.

It produced a report. That report recommended a number of things, including a delay period during which a task force could be structured to bring forward further information which would be of assistance to producers, processors, consumers and others that are interested in the question.

Over the course of the last year this process has gone forward. The delay period has been in place and remains in place until the first of July. The task force has completed its work. A great deal of useful information has been brought forward which will be helpful to all of those interested in this question so they can understand and appreciate all of the issues and all of the arguments, pro and con, with a little more detail.

The key question is one of health and the efficacy of this product, which is being studied as is required by law by the regulatory and scientific officials within the Department of Health. Unless and until the Department of Health issues a notice of compliance, the use of this product is governed under the controls of the Food and Drugs Act.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean Landry (Lotbinière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, less than 19 days before the moratorium expires, the Minister of Agriculture must admit that both the public and the dairy industry expect him to act quickly. Does the minister undertake today in this House to extend the moratorium on the use of BST?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I understand that many in the dairy industry have expressed the concerns to which the hon. gentleman has referred. There are others in the dairy industry who have advanced the other point of view.

The existence of the moratorium or the delay is not the critical issue, quite frankly. The critical issue is whether this product has a notice of compliance issued to it by the legal regulatory authorities in Health Canada. No such notice of compliance has been issued. Therefore the sale and distribution of this product in Canada remains illegal.

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### INDIAN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, on May 31 I faxed the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development regarding the Adams Lake road blockade to tell him that both the native spokesman and the lessees behind the blockade urgently requested his personal involvement. As of 9.30 this morning I have had no reply.