

Oral Questions

PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is also with regard to the free trade issue. In response to the pharmaceutical industry lobby in the United States the National Association of Manufacturers said the following in their testimony: "The United States Government has received repeated assurances—"

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the Hon. Member have a question?

Mr. Riis: My question is to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. Is it true that assurances have been given?

Hon. James Kelleher (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, no assurances have been given.

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AGRICULTURE

CROP INSURANCE—RECREATIONAL SEEDING INQUIRY

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. There is a very real concern that this spring some prairie farmers will indulge in what they call "recreational seeding". Will the Minister confer with various farm groups and his provincial counterparts in order to examine federal-provincial crop insurance programs to find ways to deter those who would mine rather than farm their land?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, some of us may find the term "recreational seeding", which the Hon. Member used, to be somewhat interesting. I share his concern and appreciate the representations he is making. The federal-provincial crop insurance program has worked extremely well. We want to ensure that that program is widely used, but we must take all steps possible to ensure that the program is not misused. I can assure the Hon. Member that I will communicate his concerns to my provincial counterparts.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LIBYA—ADVICE TO CANADIANS TO LEAVE COUNTRY

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Last week he advised Canadians in Libya to use their own judgment on whether they should leave Libya. The Deputy Prime Minister said in the House: "There is no immediate threat to Canadians". With no apparent change in circumstances, the Government is now telling Canadians to leave. Why has there been this reversal? Why did he not advise Canadians to leave last week?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there has been no reversal in the advice given by the Government of Canada. There has been no reversal on this question at all on this side of the House. We have consistently been making clear to Canadians our judgment about the instability of the situation in Libya. As I indicated to journalists who asked this question outside the House yesterday, while there is a period of relative calm now, there is no guarantee that that calm will continue. Even with all of our contingency plans, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to come to the aid of each Canadian in that very large country. For that reason I extended the advice of the Government of Canada that Canadians now in Libya should leave.

PRESENCE OF CANADIAN COMPANIES IN LIBYA

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, if the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Government believe that Canadians should now leave, would it not follow that the companies they work for in Libya should also leave as part of a meaningful economic boycott of Libya?

• (1440)

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member will know there are limits in law to the authority of the Government of Canada regarding the activities in another country of Canadian companies or citizens. We have done what we can do. We have taken one action regarding the export of certain kinds of Canadian oil drilling equipment with particular western technology. The Prime Minister has made it very clear that we are prepared to consider other actions in concert with other countries.

I think it is important for the House of Commons to recognize that the American action the other day was taken because they saw no alternative. What is essential now for Canada and other countries interested in stability is that we work together to find alternative ways to deal with states which encourage terrorism.

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AGRICULTURE

REQUEST FOR DEFICIENCY PAYMENT FOR WESTERN FARMERS

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board. In Regina yesterday my leader, the Hon. Member for Humboldt—Lake Centre, and myself met with senior officials of some western farm organizations to discuss the crisis facing Canadian farmers. There was a strong consensus among those organizations that a deficiency payment is needed to offset the losses caused by low prices. Will the Minister accept the advice of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, the United Grain Growers and the National Farmers Union, and introduce a farm support program so that farmers will know where they stand?