

Parliamentary Debate – Hansards

House of Commons

Wednesday 11 July 2012

The House met at half-past Eleven o'clock

PRAYERS

[Mr Speaker *in the Chair*]

Oral Answers to Questions

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Secretary of State was asked—

Bilateral Aid Review

Q7. [116143] **Jim Dobbin (Heywood and Middleton) (Lab/Co-op):** The Government rightly donate millions in overseas aid to developing countries, including India, to eradicate poverty and disease. Despite that, the Canadian Government, including the Government of Quebec, are to invest 58 million dollars in an asbestos-producing mine; this is not for use in Canada, of course, but to export to developing countries, including India, which will put thousands of poor people at risk from deadly asbestosis and mesothelioma. Will the Prime Minister and the International Development Secretary encourage international communities, including the World Health Organisation, to oppose this quite outrageous decision?

The Prime Minister: I will be seeing the head of the WHO later today, so I can raise this issue with them. As the hon. Gentleman knows, asbestos is banned in the UK, in the EU and in a number of other countries. We are totally opposed to its use anywhere and would deplore its supply to developing countries. The Department for International Development does not provide funding to projects that encourage developing countries to import asbestos from any country or for any purpose. We are not aware that DFID funds have been used in that way at all and I would take urgent action were they to have been, but he makes a strong point about the Indian situation.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm120711/debtext/120711-0001.htm#12071139003124>