

Government Orders

Those countries that are very far from the Middle East have experienced hardship earlier because of our government's cutbacks twice in ODA to their programs. The gap is widening in Third World countries between the rich and the poor and it is becoming critical as a situation in itself in that, by allowing this to continue, we could be provoking a global depression to say nothing of recession here in Canada.

The oil crisis that is exacerbating an already bad situation is creating very bleak situations for many countries. The minister mentioned that she was planning to factor in adjustments for these countries that are severely affected by the oil crisis.

Can she assure us, first, that ODA funds will not be diverted to east Europe? As well, in the face of the extreme crisis being faced by so many Third World countries because of the oil crisis, is Cabinet reconsidering the ODA cutbacks and will it not just factor in adjustments but increase ODA levels to the countries most affected by the crisis?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Landry (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the hon. member's interest in development, and although we may not have met, I am very much aware of her interest in the area of development assistance.

First of all, I would like to say that this government, as the hon. member knows because I have given her this answer many times before, is very committed to helping Third World countries. I think we have demonstrated this in a number of ways, and of course we spend a considerable amount on development aid. I think there are other factors as well that show our commitment to Third World countries.

Perhaps I may remind the hon. member that we were the first country to forgive the debts of Third World countries in sub-Saharan Africa—both Commonwealth countries and members of *La Francophonie*; we were also one of the first countries to transform our loans into donations. I think that is also a clear indication of our commitment to helping Third World countries. The hon. member warned earlier against directing aid funds to Eastern Europe, and I believe we have made that commitment. In other words, CIDA aid budgets as such are not used for countries in Eastern Europe. Those are

new budgets, and our existing aid budgets are used for countries that are eligible, and the hon. member knows the countries on the list.

As for the present situation, we are aware of the tremendous difficulties caused by the crisis, in addition to the problems already being experienced by those countries. I think that when working with Third World countries, which includes working through various multi-lateral mechanisms, by participating in various international committees and also bilateral talks, we always try to determine the best ways to maximize our aid in terms of responding to the specific problems of Third World countries.

That is what we are doing today. We are already aware of some of the increasing problems of certain countries, and I can assure the hon. member that we are personally committed to alleviating as much as we can the additional problems created by this crisis.

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, the Minister knows full well—she said so herself—that we are providing assistance to Jordan and others, but principally to Turkey.

Will the Minister tell us whether the Prime Minister or the Minister for External Affairs or indeed others have reminded Turkey, which is now receiving assistance because of this crisis, that it never acted upon the United Nations' request for withdrawal of their troops from Cyprus?

There are numerous United Nations resolutions that were not acted upon by the government of Cyprus and now, because another country was invaded and pursuant to United Nations resolution, we are providing assistance to that country. This issue is of great concern in Canada, and I can assure you that hundreds of Canadians will listen carefully to your answer.

Hon. Monique Landry (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague knows full well that this is a crisis situation. I dare hope that all Hon. Members and all Canadians were happy to see the Government respond so quickly in providing assistance to the people affected by this crisis. I think Canadians have the reputation of being generous people. We have upheld this reputation during other major crisis—including the famine in Ethiopia—and I think Canadians generally have always supported the actions of their