

*Oral Questions*

*The Toronto Star* tells us that the Prime Minister had his armoured limousine flown to Costa Rica with an additional one to serve as a back-up. What a waste. They could not be used because there was no unleaded gas in the country to put in them.

My question to the Prime Minister is this: When is the Prime Minister going to come back down to earth and realize that the Canadian taxpayers are the ones who are paying for his moments of illusions of grandeur?

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

• (1440 )

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, there are some questions that go beyond the very flexible standards of this House. I think the insinuation of that question is one of them.

Let me make two facts known to the hon. member. I think he might know them already. The first is that decision was not taken by the Prime Minister. It was a decision taken by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who are responsible for the security in Canada and abroad of members of the government and of officers of Parliament, including the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

They made an assessment that the security situation in that meeting, at which was present, for example, the President of Colombia, that the security situation was sufficient that it required unusual precautions to be taken. I point out to the hon. member, and this may not be of much interest to him, that there were frequent assassination threats issued upon people who were present at that meeting. During the presence of the President of Colombia at the Costa Rica meeting there was in fact a continuation of the series of assassinations and bombings in his country.

We have a choice. We can back away from the struggles of that continent, we can back away from the fight against drugs, or we can take our role to try to help the other countries of the Americas deal with serious problems that affect this whole hemisphere. We believe it is important for Canada to be there and if the RCMP says that the Prime Minister of Canada should enjoy

security while he is there then I think most Canadians would accept the advice of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hopkins:** Mr. Speaker, it is always great when you can back up and blame the RCMP. Who runs the RCMP? They are under this government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Shame!

**Mr. Hopkins:** That is where they are. In addition to the limousine fiasco, the Prime Minister had, at times, an entourage of some 41 to 60 secretaries, advisers, valets, bodyguards and other functionaries with him during his 18 day trip to Kuala Lumpur and Costa Rica. This was double the number that Great Britain's Margaret Thatcher had. When is the Prime Minister going to practice what he preaches, tighten his belt and set an example for all Canadians? It is no wonder the Minister of Finance has to levy a 9 per cent GST in this country.

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting revelation that Liberal members of this House believe that the government of the day runs and directs the RCMP. That is not the practice of this government, although it may well have been the practice of Liberal governments in the past.

Second, the figures quoted by the hon. member are distorted and are false. Third, we have just heard from the leader of the New Democratic Party the importance of having available to Canada when we are engaged in important international conferences and important international decisions the best Canadian advice available. The Prime Minister was dealing directly in the two conferences from which he has just returned with 65 heads of other governments. We dealt with important questions ranging from trying to fight drug trafficking through to trying to protect the environment to trying to find ways in which we can deal with the burden of debt upon low income countries, not to mention questions with regard to the situation in southern Africa.

Of course we had advisers there to help us ensure that Canadian policy was effective and I think that the hon. member will find when he looks to the testimony of other participants in that conference that Canadian policy on those matters has been effective.