

*Adjournment Debate***Honourable André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel)**

I want to thank the minister for his courtesy in giving me an advance copy of his statement.

The minister's description of the horrors of the war in Cambodia dramatically highlighted the suffering of the Cambodian people.

I welcome Canada's decision to re-establish Cambodia's eligibility for official development assistance provided by Canada.

I wonder, however, how the minister will be able to meet these pressing needs at a time when his colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) is talking about spending cuts. The budget envelope of the Canadian International Development Agency has already been severely affected, and many people are afraid there will be further cuts in the next Budget of the Minister of Finance.

At a time when the minister is talking about a full-scale review of Canada's foreign policy in connection with the political changes that are occurring throughout the world, he chooses to raise the subject of Cambodia. And why not? But when is he going to talk about East-West relations and how his government intends to meet the new challenges facing us as a result of the extraordinary changes that have taken place in the Warsaw Pact countries? When will the minister consider North-South relations worthy of a minister's statement in this House? We are very anxious to know how the Conservative government intends to deal more compassionately with the debt of Third World countries and how it will try to resolve a problem that is taking on alarming proportions.

The situation in Indochina deserves our attention, but I really wonder why the minister was so anxious to make this statement today. I am concerned about his priorities. The Conservative government already has a reputation for making pretty speeches. Unfortunately, its reputation for concrete action falls rather short of the mark.

The minister tells us that a Canadian official is now in Cambodia with representatives of Canadian non-governmental organizations to try and find the best way to resume an aid relationship there.

We are still at the stage of good intentions. No definite decision has been made, and we don't know whether the government will make a significant contribution that will justify today's statement or whether that contribution will be negligible, as has often been the case after pompous statements made by the Prime Minister or a member of cabinet.

Today, we in Ottawa are being visited by several representatives of Canadian non-governmental organizations concerned about the budget cuts. They have come to tell us that if CIDA again reduced their grants, some of them would have to give up their work and close down.

At a time when the Canadian government calls on these organizations more and more for its foreign aid program, it would be regrettable if the government's left hand, represented by the Finance Department, strangled the agencies which the government's right hand, represented by the Canadian International Development Agency, is reaching out to.

I therefore say to the minister: If you want Canadian non-governmental organizations to do your work in Cambodia, keep funding these agencies generously right here in this country.

In his long statement, the minister finally admitted that the crux of the Cambodian conflict remains the participation of the Khmer Rouge in any settlement. We think that the minister is taking a very great risk by putting so much trust in them and including them in the peace process, when they could again take power for themselves alone and reimpose their reign of terror.

What guarantee does the minister have that the Khmer Rouge are no longer able to make war and again plunge Cambodia into the hell it went through under Pol Pot?

I also wonder why Canada supported the Khmer Rouge's request for United Nations accreditation. It seems to me that this group should not at this time have the prestige and credibility that go with such accreditation. Has the minister had guarantees that he did not tell us about?

I hope so, because there is no doubt that peace in Cambodia is most desirable.