

Oral Questions

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, we have no confirmation of the fact that Governor General Scoon initiated an invitation for an invasion. I would only say its credibility is, I suppose, somewhat in question because of the fact it had not been mentioned in preceding days. However, I do not exclude that possibility, and we will continue to make inquiries in that regard.

• (1440)

Mr. Bosley: Madam Speaker, the Minister will know that the reason that was at least claimed for no earlier knowledge of this information was that Mr. Scoon was under house arrest and that his life was in risk if this information came out.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Bosley: Madam Speaker, Members opposite claim that the Governor General of Grenada was under house arrest by the Americans. That just shows their lack of knowledge of what is going on. My question, Madam Speaker, to the Minister is—

An Hon. Member: It's cheap.

Mr. Bosley: It is not cheap, Madam Speaker. It is the Members opposite who are being cheap.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Will the Hon. member ask his question?

Mr. Bosley: Madam Speaker, you are absolutely correct.

GOVERNMENT POLICY INQUIRY

Mr. John Bosley (Don Valley West): To paraphrase what the Prime Minister said earlier this week, is it Canada's policy to support the requests of Governors General of Commonwealth countries when they ask Commonwealth countries to come to their aid?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, I shall begin by dealing with the first part of the Hon. Member's question in which he said the reason that the information was not communicated in the last two days was because the Governor General was under house arrest. If he had communicated an invitation to the Americans to undertake such an invasion, then, as I was suggesting, it was obviously in the interest of the Americans to have made public the fact that they had received such an invitation, and I would find it surprising that they had not done so.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Regan: In relation to the second part of the Hon. Member's question, the question is hypothetical and obviously would depend upon the circumstances. Those circumstances would be judged by any sensible Government on the basis of the merit therein.

SAFETY OF GOVERNOR GENERAL OF GRENADA

Mr. John Bosley (Don Valley West): Madam Speaker, could the Minister please explain to the House how the Government of Canada, recognizing that the then Prime Minister of the country was shot once he was released from house arrest, can maintain that the Governor General of the island was not at some risk from the people in control of the island?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, I am not sure if the Hon. Member is not listening or whether he is desperately trying to find grounds for a supplementary question. I have never at any time said that the Governor General was not under some degree of risk. He may well have been. That is not at all relevant to the matters which we have been discussing. Perhaps the Hon. Member would like to check the "blues".

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[Translation]

INCOME TAX

DEPARTMENT'S TREATMENT OF TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA MUSICIANS

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue.

[English]

A recent ruling by Revenue Canada requires that musicians with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra be taxed as employees rather than as independent contractors or professionals. Liberal Members of Parliament from Toronto have been deeply concerned about this particular ruling, and the matter is now urgent. In order to meet Revenue Canada's deadline, the bank would have to start today to redesign its payroll deduction systems, and the orchestra's annual meeting is to be held at four o'clock this afternoon. Can the Minister offer to the orchestra or its musicians any hope that this ruling will be reconsidered?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, I wish to thank the Hon. Member for his question. I would like to point out that yesterday afternoon, I discussed this matter with some of his colleagues, including the Members for Scarborough Centre and Mississauga North—

[English]

After those discussions, I asked officials of my Department to stop any actions related to the ruling made by the district office.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bussières: Madam Speaker, I also want to inform the House that I will be meeting with representatives of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra on Tuesday, November 1—