

Oral Questions

● (1415)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD*[English]***APARTHEID****SOUTH AFRICA—EFFECT OF CANADIAN MEASURES**

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and arises out of his statement on South Africa this morning. We have checked with the Minister's own officials and they have affirmed that the value of Canadian government purchases from South Africa is less than \$1 million. The banned South African attaches already live in the United States, and obviously the ban on promotion of South African tourism is economically meaningless. The measures do not touch our \$230 million in imports from South Africa, nor do they touch our \$150 million in exports to South Africa, nor do they touch Canadian investment in that country.

Given today's state of emergency in South Africa, why has the Canadian Government failed to announce any measures of substance and just engaged in what we might term hollow gestures?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am rather surprised to hear that characterization by the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition, particularly in light of the response by his Party to my earlier statement in the House of Commons. There is no question that the wider range of economic measures and indeed other measures which Canada might wish to take against apartheid remain to be taken. We have indicated quite clearly that if necessary we will take them.

I believe it was the Hon. Member for New Westminster—Coquitlam who indicated in her response earlier today on behalf of the New Democratic Party that this Government, unlike predecessor Governments, is acting consistently and strongly to try to bring an end to apartheid and to try to play our role in a way which advances international institutions like the Commonwealth.

*[Translation]***SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

Mr. Speaker, the action taken by the Government of Canada today does not reflect the fairly strong statement made by the Prime Minister before the United Nations a few months ago. Why should the Commonwealth Heads of State wait until August to hold their meeting? Why this constant postponing of concrete action and economic sanctions against South Africa, and why not act now, as Bishop Tutu suggested to the Minister and this country during his recent visit?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): First of all, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Government and the Prime Minister of Canada are doing a lot more than just making strong statements to the United Nations. We have taken on a leadership role, both here and within the Commonwealth, with the Nassau Accord. The Prime Minister of Canada intends to continue this work, and that is why he called Prime Minister Hawke of Australia last night, and he will be in touch with Mr. Gandhi to continue the co-operation that proved so effective in Nassau. As for the meeting in London scheduled in August, we made enquiries to find out whether it was possible to change the date. However, the Commonwealth Secretariat replied that this was not feasible. And that is why Canada intends to be there and the Prime Minister will be there to pursue the leadership role taken by Canada against apartheid.

*[English]***GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I think Canadian people are expecting more from the Government at this stage, now that the Eminent Persons Group has not succeeded; we are awaiting something more than hollow gestures. Why is it that the diplomatic process in which we are engaged allows more and more months to go by and more and more lives to be lost in South Africa? What are the Government of Canada and the Prime Minister doing to impress upon our friends in Great Britain, the United States, and West Germany to come along with the rest of the world and impose sanctions on South Africa?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as one former Prime Minister of Canada I can say to the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition that the present Prime Minister of Canada is doing far more to end apartheid than any of his predecessors, with the exception of the Late Right Hon. John Diefenbaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1420)

REQUEST FOR MANDATORY MEASURES

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Several months ago the Government introduced a voluntary ban on the sale of krugerrand gold coins in Canada, a voluntary ban on new loans to the Government of South Africa and its agencies, a voluntary ban on the sale of crude oil and refined products, and strengthened the voluntary code of conduct for Canadian companies in South Africa. Considering the continued resistance of the South African Government to any meaningful change, will the Government now consider making these voluntary measures mandatory?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, in some cases that would not be