

*Oral Questions*

In the absence of any provisions in the rules of the Supreme Court of Canada for filing such documents, does the minister not think that the action the government took in filing that press release was highly improper? Even at this late stage, will he not issue instructions to whomever does his filing for him in his department, to have that document removed immediately from the Supreme Court of Canada docket?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development):** Madam Speaker, I think the Supreme Court judges can handle these matters quite properly and it is not for me to debate them in front of the House of Commons. I said I was not aware of the filing of that document and I will inquire about it. If there is something improper about it, I am sure the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada know the rules and do not need the advice of the House of Commons, especially from this member.

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**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****EL SALVADOR—REPORTED SUSPENSION OF LAND REFORM PROGRAM**

**Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Would he tell us whether the government is concerned about the fact that the Constituent Assembly of El Salvador, under the presidency of the notorious right wing Major Roberto d'Aubuisson, decided on Tuesday to suspend the long-promised land reform program for up to four years? This would cut half the peasant population off from opportunities promised to them. If this is the case, has the government expressed its concern to the Government of El Salvador and the Government of the United States and, if so, what is their response?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, as yet we have only the same newspaper reports on which I presume my hon. friend's question is based. We have not received an analysis of what actually happened in the El Salvador Assembly. We are concerned about the preliminary reports and are trying to find out the exact implications of what has happened. When we have that analysis we will be in a position to make any representations which we believe to be appropriate.

**UNITED STATES ARMS SHIPMENTS TO EL SALVADOR**

**Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question concerns the background to the suspension of land reform, namely, the decision of the United States government to send more arms to El Salvador. In light of the fact that both the Canadian and the United States government's policies toward El Salvador were based partly on the promise of land reform, and in light of the fact that the reported decision to suspend land reform followed only five days after a United States decision to send \$60 million worth of arms to the

government led by Major Roberto d'Aubuisson, is the Canadian government now prepared to reconsider its policy? Will it condemn the farcical right-wing elections held in El Salvador on March 28? Will it condemn the rising violence under that new government? Will it condemn the increase in the supply of U.S. arms to Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, and will it condemn this brazen betrayal of the promised land reforms?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, as my hon. friend knows, we have long been opposed to the supplying of arms by the United States to countries in that situation, just as we have been opposed to the supplying of arms from countries on the left.

I am sorry that my hon. friend's remarks are so intemperate. They indicate a bias which I think is unworthy of him and his party with respect to a democratic election which has taken place in El Salvador, and which everyone else in the world has widely accepted as the genuine voice of the people in El Salvador.

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**FINANCE****REQUESTED REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE OF PERSONAL AND CORPORATE TAX STRUCTURE**

**Hon. John M. Reid (Kenora-Rainy River):** Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Finance. I know that the minister and his department have been intensively studying the tax cuts passed by the United States government which will come into effect on July 1. There has been a great deal of publicity about the tax cuts on the personal side, but I understand that there are also significant tax cuts on the business and corporate side.

Will the minister arrange a reference for the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs and would he and his officials appear before it with their documentation, so that over the summer the committee may study the relative rates for personal tax and corporate tax before budget bills come down in the fall?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member's question is obviously of interest. We have been examining the relativity or comparability of corporate rates in the United States and Canada. Obviously it is of importance to the Canadian economy to ensure that relative tax burdens are in line as much as possible. It is our conclusion that our taxing regime for corporations is as favourable as that in the United States.

The hon. member added a request for a special reference to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs. I know that committee has a great deal of work before it at the present time. I am not sure whether it would be possible for it to handle a new reference when so many burdens have already been laid upon its very capable members.