

Is it not about time, as a counterpoint to what is going on in Great Britain and the United States, for the Government to express leadership to the Commonwealth by announcing now the imposition of a complete ban on investment in South Africa and an embargo on the importation of South African agricultural products?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the most appropriate time and place for the Government to show further leadership on this issue are at the Commonwealth mini-summit conference which is to take place in the next few days.

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS—REQUEST FOR AID FOR NEIGHBOURING STATES

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, I do not think that the Deputy Prime Minister is aware of what has been going on. The Commonwealth is falling apart around our ears.

The Prime Minister has indicated that if apartheid is not dealt with effectively by South Africa, a complete termination of all economic relations with South Africa will be imposed and a committee of the House of Commons has supported the Prime Minister in that—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: May I ask the Hon. Member to put a question, please?

Mr. McCurdy: Mr. Speaker, has the Government prepared a plan, either alone or in concert with other nations, to provide economic assistance to the frontline states which will be retaliated against by South Africa in the event of the imposition of those sanctions the Prime Minister has promised he would impose?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if the Hon. Member is advocating the dismantlement of the Commonwealth. We take the very strong position that the Commonwealth is a very important institution and we will do everything we can to see that it flourishes and continues. It is within that context that the Prime Minister will be making his presentation and furthering the commitment of the Government, which has been so clearly expressed by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs, to pursue the kind of policies necessary to end apartheid in South Africa.

Oral Questions

FINANCE

TAX REFORM PROPOSALS

Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. I am sure all Canadians applaud him for his accelerated approach on tax reform and simplification. Has the Minister set a goal whereby, once all the changes are made, the system will be revenue neutral so that the changes will not be seen as being a tax grab?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the tax reform proposals I announced on Friday are designed to shift the burden of taxation. They are not designed to raise revenues in any way. We are trying to examine the balance between corporate income tax, personal income tax, and sales tax. In examining the balance between the various elements of the tax system, we want to ensure that there is a sufficient degree of incentive to encourage economic growth and job creation and to do it in a way that will keep the tax system competitive in view of the changes that are being considered in the United States.

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IMMIGRATION

INTRODUCTION OF VISAS FOR PORTUGUESE VISITORS

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Immigration whom I congratulate on his new responsibilities. When his predecessor announced the new refugee policy back in May, the Government reversed itself on an earlier decision to apply visa restrictions to Portugal on the grounds that that was the incorrect mechanism to address refugee related matters. Why did the Minister suddenly slap visa restrictions on Portugal in the middle of the summer? Why did he not choose to prosecute the small number of immigration consultants and lawyers who are responsible for the majority of bogus claims and who are very well known to the Minister and his Department?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Minister of State (Immigration)): Mr. Speaker, the visa was imposed in order to protect the credibility and integrity of the entire Canadian refugee and immigration policy. We did it regretfully. I have announced that it is a temporary measure. When my officials and myself determine that the situation has been normalized, we can deem that the visa restrictions be lifted.

REQUEST FOR REVOCATION

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, by imposing a visa restriction he is punishing the innocent and is allowing the guilty to get away. Since visas punish the more than 10,000 visitors from Portugal who come to Canada every year and unfairly and needlessly tarnish the reputations of the proud and hard-working Portuguese-Canadians, will the Minister not instead revoke the visa measures and concentrate fully on