

Oral Questions

on the shores of a sovereign country. There were all kinds of hypotheses put forward.

We do know—we were informed—that several of the eastern Caribbean leaders were quite indignant and incensed about the events going on in Grenada, particularly about the murder of Prime Minister Bishop. These views were conveyed to us. Some were talking that we should act physically. Some were talking that we should even try to get groups together to restore order. However, I am saying that, as far as we know, the decision to invade was not taken, as advised by the United States, until some time, perhaps, late Sunday or during the day of Monday. I do not even know at what hour that decision was conveyed to the Caribbean leaders.

I do know that in that period of time, between the Sunday and the invasion on Tuesday, a message was supposed to come to me, personally, about the invasion, asking my views about it, even asking if we would be prepared to participate. That message never came to me because the call was never put through by the responsible political leader.

POSSIBILITY OF COMMONWEALTH PEACEKEEPING FORCE

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, would the Prime Minister indicate to the House three things? First, who was the responsible political leader who did not put the call through? Second, in view of the fact that the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States has asked the Commonwealth Secretariat for a peace-keeping force to take control of Grenada—assuming that security can be forthcoming—until such time as an election may be held, would the Prime Minister indicate if any request has been made to Canada to join in that Commonwealth peace-keeping force? Third, what would be our response in the event such a request were made? Would we willingly join?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I have sought the answer to part of that question, to wit, whether the request had been made to us directly. So far as I am able to find out, no such request has been made to us. We know of Secretary General Ramphal's suggestion, or appeal. However, I believe it was made generally to the Commonwealth countries. I have myself been attempting to communicate with certain Commonwealth leaders to explore the same type of idea, Madam Speaker.

If an election is to be held after the invading troops leave, then presumably some kind of Commonwealth force would be required. I am offering, subject to the approval of Cabinet, to participate in such an observation force on an election.

If, Madam Speaker, and I hope it is not the case, but if the hostilities are prolonged—and we have no certain information on that, either, but it appears that the invaders are meeting with considerably more resistance than they thought—I would even go further and suggest that perhaps we could call for a truce, ask all foreign nationals to leave the island of Grenada, and then the Commonwealth could send observers in to ensure that that truce is respected. This is a strange way of making

this suggestion public, Madam Speaker. I am trying to get views of other Commonwealth leaders on that, but I feel it is appropriate in these circumstances, because of the great confusion surrounding the whole operation, that I take Parliament into my confidence in this matter.

● (1430)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[*Translation*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF MR. DANIEL BENOIST, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR MINISTER OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL SOLIDARITY OF FRANCE

Madam Speaker: I have the honour to draw the attention of the House to the distinguished presence in our Gallery of Dr. Daniel Benoist, Secretary of State to the Minister of Social Affairs and National Solidarity of France, with responsibility for the aged.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

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[*English*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

INVASION OF GRENADA—INFORMATION PROVIDED BY PRIME MINISTER OF BARBADOS

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, I was going to address this question to the Prime Minister but I will ask it of the Minister who has otherwise been fielding questions on the Grenadian situation.

I understand from External Affairs that there was a meeting last Friday in Barbados between officials in our Commission in Barbados and Mr. Adams, the Prime Minister of Barbados. At that meeting Prime Minister Adams said there was a very strong likelihood of a U.S. led invasion of Grenada. Was this information passed on to Ottawa? I am told it was the Minister for External Relations, who has disappeared from the scene in the last few days, who received this information. If so, why was no immediate action taken on Friday or Saturday to remove Canadians from Grenada? Or was the Government, with advance knowledge of an invasion, deliberately failing to evacuate Canadians in order not to undermine the United States rationale for carrying out an invasion, namely, to save its nationals?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, I apologize to the Hon. Member that the Prime Minister has stepped out to take a call from Mrs. Thatcher. He will be returning shortly.

Relating to the Hon. Member's question, the premise is inaccurate. It is true that our High Commissioner in Barbados,