

● (1425)

All the agreements to which we refer have termination dates at the end of March, 1982; so there is nothing unexpected in what we are doing. It is totally normal to renegotiate these agreements for a new phase, and I ask the hon. member not to engage in the rather shabby—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. MacEachen:** —tactic of trying to strike fear into the minds of students of universities in the country in anticipation of a decision which has not been taken yet.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** Madam Speaker, with all due respect to the minister, these are not hypothetical assumptions. On the one hand we have a statement from the minister of health saying that there will be substantial cuts in the area of federal government funding for post-secondary education institutions in the country.

How does the Minister of Finance reconcile that statement, on the one hand, with his own statement, on the other, made in Montreal earlier this week, Monday, February 23, to the Canadian Club in which he said, very briefly, Madam Speaker:

At a time of relatively high unemployment, areas and sectors of the economy are critically short of skilled manpower. There is a need for a major reorientation of our education and training systems to manpower requirements of the 1980s.

Madam Speaker, how does he reconcile that statement, and especially the concluding statement, "There is a need to ensure that the engineers and scientists—"

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member should ask a question. A supplementary should obviously be shorter than the first question, because it is a supplementary. I do have to apply some discipline to some hon. members who go on too long in their questions.

**Mr. McMillan:** Madam Speaker, how does the minister reconcile his statement, that there is a need to ensure that the engineers and scientists of tomorrow are effectively turned out by our universities, with the statement by the minister of health that the federal government is contemplating massive cuts in expenditures by the federal government for the operating costs of post-secondary educational institutions in Canada, including community colleges, universities and vocational institutes?

**Mr. MacEachen:** Madam Speaker, no matter how often the hon. member or his leader repeat the misrepresentations, they do not become facts. It has never been stated by the Minister of Health, to my knowledge, that we were contemplating massive cuts in support of community colleges. That is quite a false statement, and what I said in Montreal seems to me to be quite defensible. I do not take the view that the quality of education in the country is to be measured solely by the amount of money we pour into the system.

### Oral Questions

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

#### EL SALVADOR—CANADIAN GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. According to Sunday's *New York Times*, the only foreign military personnel known to be in El Salvador are from the United States of America.

In this context, I would like to ask the minister, considering that Canada firmed its opposition to such intervention by voting in support of the United Nations' resolution on El Salvador last fall, can the minister explain to the House why he stated in a letter to the editor in chief of the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* just a few days ago:

In the circumstances, it is not Canada's role to mount a public protest against the United States.

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, that letter was about a different subject, or a different aspect of the same subject. It had to do with other questions and not with the question of the presence of advisers.

We have no resident ambassador in El Salvador. We have only the same knowledge of events there which my hon. friend has. We, obviously, have presented our position to the United States, one which is concerned with the supply of offensive arms to any country which is in a state of civil disorder. We have communicated that view to the American government. That is what the letter which was quoted was about.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Madam Speaker, already some 13,000 lives have been lost in this bloody civil war in El Salvador. All objective observers pin down exclusive responsibility for this to the vicious junta which is in charge of that state right now.

Considering that church leaders representing almost every faith in Canada have joined church leaders in the United States and church leaders in El Salvador condemning outside military intervention, why does the Government of Canada not join the governments of Venezuela and Mexico in publicly condemning this outside intervention?

**Mr. MacGuigan:** Madam Speaker, of course our position is against outside intervention, and I understand that in fact the position of the American government is to attempt to prevent outside intervention on the part of Cuba and other communist countries.