

Oral Questions

Hon. Charles Lapointe (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, I am grateful to the Hon. Member for his question. It is a fact that my colleague the Minister of National Defence and I announced yesterday that the Bombardier Corporation had been awarded a contract of about \$65 million to provide Jeep-type light utility trucks to the Canadian Armed Forces. This contract will create directly 312 jobs at the Bombardier plant, and indirectly a thousand or so more throughout Canada. As the Hon. Member is certainly aware, this contract is in addition to a \$140-million contract also awarded to the Bombardier Corporation, to supply the Canadian Armed Forces with 2½-ton trucks, which has created directly 375 jobs at the plant and some 1,500 sub-contract jobs throughout Canada. The ILTIS technology which Bombardier acquired when Volkswagen set shop in Canada is finally bearing fruit, and as the Bombardier Corporation is marking this year its 25th Anniversary, Madam Speaker, we must rejoice that co-operation has existed and continues to exist between the Government of Canada and this major Quebec-based corporation.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**CENTRAL AMERICA—CANADIAN OFFER TO MONITOR PEACE ARRANGEMENTS**

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Secretary of State for External Affairs I would like to direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister. The Minister of State for External Relations is reported today as stating that Canada would be willing to monitor any future peace or truce arrangement in Central America arranged by the Contadora group. Will the Minister tell the House in specific terms exactly what this role would entail, and whether this commitment followed discussions by the Minister of State or by the Minister himself with representatives of Honduras, El Salvador, and Costa Rica, as well as with the Contadora group and the Foreign Ministers of Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Cuba?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, the position of the Canadian Government in relation to any peacekeeping corps in the area has been clear for some period of time. The position the Government has taken is that we are in support of the group of nations in the area that have been working toward peace. We do not see Canada as essentially playing a role in any peace corps in Central America, but we are prepared to consider it if requested.

The Hon. Member is concerned about the type of consultations that occurred before Canada established that position. I would take the portion of his question as notice for the Secretary of State for External Affairs to deal with upon his return to the House.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): That does not exactly square with the reports, but I am glad to have the additional information.

REQUEST FOR PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Madam Speaker, could the Minister assure the House that before any decision is taken the Government will allow Parliament, as it has in the past in the case of Cyprus and the Middle East, to debate any such monitoring role and to approve or withhold approval as circumstances warrant, before Canadians are sent to Central America? Could he give the House any information on the remark of the Minister of State that Canadians would act as "verification teams" to cover border areas, and would control the acquisition of foreign arms by the countries? Would he also let it be known whether there is any time limit placed upon the presence in that area of any Canadian groups?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, I will bring the representations of the Hon. Member to the attention of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, but I want to emphasize again that the position of Canada is, and has been, that we are not seeking to play a role in any monitoring of peace in the area. We feel, as responsible members of this hemisphere, that if a request is made to us by the appropriate authorities for an appropriate type of participation, we should carefully consider that question.

ROLE OF PARLIAMENT

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of State for International Trade. As this could be a dangerous and costly operation for Canadians to engage in, would the Minister assure the House that before any agreement is entered into, even if it is in response to a request, as he suggested, that the matter will be brought before the House for approval or disapproval before any Canadians are asked to engage in what the Minister has been suggesting?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member can be assured that the usual procedures and the appropriate ones for the Government will be followed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs and other Ministers who would be involved.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON CANADIAN OBLIGATION

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of State for International Trade who just put his finger on why we feel so uncertain about what the Government may be doing. Is he aware of what the Minister of State for External Relations said, namely, that eventually Canada will have to pay the price for its involvement and interest in the talks, and that Canada has an obligation to support the group's efforts? Is he aware of