

States seems to be going forward into the past and using the same sort of doctrine that it has been employing for decades in Central America?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I agree that it is an important issue. I agree that it is one that deserves to be examined with some care. As the Government of Canada said in our official statement, we are worried about the precedent. We think the precedent has to be very strictly contained.

The hon. member surely understands that it is inaccurate to describe this as an arbitrary action or, indeed, to make an equation with other things that might have been done by other countries in other places. What happened here had to do with a country in which the United States had 12,000 troops present by agreement, present by an international treaty. Those people were threatened by a deliberate declaration of war against their country that was then made more personal by the murder of one of those troops and threats posed against members of that person's family.

The other factor which the hon. member has followed with some care has been that the Organization of American States, and other organizations, over the last several months have been working extensively to try to find a peaceful resolution to this question. The Americans co-operated in that process.

As the President said early this morning, "There comes a time when enough is enough". They faced a situation where a declaration of war had been made against their citizens present in Panama under the protection and cover of international treaty. It was not an arbitrary act. We believe it does not create a precedent, but we certainly want to ensure that it is not seen as creating a precedent.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, when the Special Committee on the Peace Process in Central America was in Central America we found that people on both the left and the right of the political spectrum were very suspicious of the view that the Americans took of their own role in Panama. I would be

very surprised if in the following days we do not see a similar concern expressed by member states of the OAS.

I think the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State are very mistaken if they think that Canadians do not share a general view of the way in which the Americans are very selective in their outrage about the deaths of Americans.

I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs if he recalls, for instance, the death of four American nuns at the hands of the regime in El Salvador, which did not provoke the same kind of outrage, did not provoke the same kind of military action. The problem here is that the rhetoric which surrounds the American invasion in this case is rhetoric which is not lived up to in many other circumstances.

I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs this. Is he at least prepared to acknowledge that there are many other instances in which regimes attack Americans, attack their own people, attack their clergy, attack their human rights activists and yet Washington does nothing? If he would at least acknowledge the hypocrisy of American rhetoric in this case, he might have more credibility with the American people.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is well acquainted with the revolutionary changes that have been brought to eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, by the determination of Mr. Gorbachev, very eloquently, very persuasively, to encourage people to turn to new thinking and not to be the captives of old images of a former time.

We have had this discussion before. I suggest to the hon. member that it is time for him to put some of his prejudices against the United States aside, to judge what is done on the basis of the circumstances in a particular case. He should indulge in a little new thinking.

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• (1500)

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Bill S-12 which was passed by the Senate yesterday would extend