

Oral Questions

Minister of Finance had talks with Mr. Parizeau for three weeks but unfortunately we never got an answer. At the time of Mr. St. Laurent and Mr. Duplessis, both parties could talk to each other and reach conclusions. Now it is difficult to know where we stand when we try to have talks and the other party does not answer.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CALL FOR IMMEDIATE END TO AID FOR CUBA

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. It arises out of the horrifying slaughter in Zaire over the weekend. At the present time, while there is no evidence that Cuban troops were engaged there, nonetheless 32,000—incidentally, transported to their destination by Air Canada—have been acting in such a way as to give leadership in undermining governments in Africa which would lead one to conclude that the leadership of Cuba has been taken over by others in this regard.

● (1432)

A few minutes ago the hon. member for High Park-Humber Valley endeavoured to move a motion to have this question looked into. In view of the utter lawlessness, dangerous to world peace, which has been perpetrated regularly since Angola was occupied by Cuban troops, will the government advise the administration in Cuba that the millions of dollars Canada has given by way of technical assistance and the contributions through the Canadian International Development Association will end once and for all, so that Canada will not be placed in the position of being an accessory to the disreputable international brigandage on the part of Cuba?

Will the Prime Minister give that assurance, because all over the world people wonder why Canada continues to give repeated assistance to a nation which has become lawless internationally?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, something was said in the preamble to the question which I did not quite understand. In some manner the right hon. member linked Air Canada to the presence of troops in Africa. I think this is another of the many unsubstantiated allegations which we hear from—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: I will substantiate it right away.

Mr. Trudeau: It is another of the unsubstantiated allegations which we are hearing constantly from the other side. If the hon. member wants to raise a supplementary question, I am sure Your Honour will recognize him.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

As to the substance of the question of foreign aid, I would point out to him that the aid program to Cuba was initiated some years ago under a regime of co-operation with Cuba which began, if my memory is correct, in the right hon. member's day. This program of co-operation began several years ago, before the Angolan incident. It is being brought to termination: the Secretary of State for External Affairs has said so. There are no present plans for any future projects in Cuba. The present projects are either terminated or are on the verge of being terminated.

In so far as concerns representations to Cuba, I would remind the right hon. member they have been made in various circumstances, including by myself to Premier Castro, indicating the degree to which Canada disapproves with horror the participation of Cuban troops in Africa.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, that is a typical kind of evasive answer one would expect from the Prime Minister who had a love affair over the years with Castro which began, or at least was participated in by him, by canoe. That is not unsubstantiated. I will go into the particulars, if the Prime Minister wants to hear them.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Will he give me the assurance that this love affair will end, that Cuba will be told it is an international brigand, and that we are not going to do anything to assist it by loan, or otherwise make available further funds for the continuance of its aggressive, unjustified actions dangerous to world peace?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is suggesting that we do things which have been done already: disapprove of the Cuban action in Angola and not continue our foreign aid.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Done when?

Mr. Trudeau: As to having a love affair in a canoe, either the hon. member knows nothing about love affairs, or canoes.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister wants proof as to his "canoedling", he can get in touch with the CIA of the United States which entered into the equation and caused him to be denied entry to the United States for years and years.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Joliette.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I just want to—

Some hon. Members: Order.