

● (1430)

[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NICARAGUA—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for External Relations, and I also wish to inform her that we agree with the Government's policy of continued assistance to Nicaragua. Considering the fact that the Prime Minister said in London a few days ago that he wanted to speak on behalf of the Third World at the Bonn Summit, could the Minister give the House the assurance that the Prime Minister will raise the subject of the trade embargo imposed by the President of the United States on the people of Nicaragua and will tell the President of the United States that Canadians deplore a decision that will have a destabilizing effect on the poor people of Central America, and that here in Canada, people are asking him to encourage a process that is very important to the quest for peace in this part of the world, that is, to encourage the Contadora process?

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I think that in Bonn, the Prime Minister will certainly mention the fact that the Third World should be present at the discussions because of their international impact. As whether there will be any discussion about Nicaragua and any kind of action in the light of the information we are receiving today, I do not think that is the primary objective of the Bonn Summit. I think it would also be premature to make any predictions as to what the Prime Minister will be saying on that occasion.

CANADIAN PEOPLE'S POSITION

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

I simply want to ask the Minister to let the Prime Minister know, while he is over there, how outraged Canadians are about this decision. The President of the United States lost the battle with Congress on his policy regarding Nicaragua, and today, he intends to make the citizens of Nicaragua pay for his defeat in Congress. I therefore hope that the Minister will forward this message to the Prime Minister and clearly explain the position taken by all Canadians on this issue.

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, Canada's position is clear. I think our role has always been to promote dialogue and conciliation, and we are convinced that the best way to bring peace to the situation in Nicaragua is by helping the Contadora process, and we shall continue to provide assistance in this way.

Oral Questions

[English]

SOVEREIGNTY

POSSIBLE APPLICATION OF UNITED STATES LAW TO INDUSTRY IN CANADA

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. He will be pleased to know that I have just been in touch with an official of the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control in the U.S. Treasury Department, who said that the United States will be bringing forward regulations within the next few days to restrict the ability of Canadian subsidiaries of United States companies to export to Nicaragua. Specifically, the official said that if a Canadian subsidiary sells a product to Nicaragua which contains a significant amount of American content, then the parent firm will pay a significant penalty. This might mean, for instance, that General Motors Canada, Ford Canada, and Chrysler Canada will be prevented from exporting parts to Nicaragua.

Will the Minister, in spite of his earlier comments, immediately request a meeting with U.S. officials so that this unilateral action on the part of the U.S. Government will not end up preventing Canadian exports, and costing Canadians jobs?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Hon. Member, I am sure that the House would be quite interested to know what his source is. All I can say at the present time is that if such regulations are received, we will naturally review them. We will certainly get in touch with American officials if we receive such regulations.

CANADIAN POSITION

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, to be precise, Ms. Catherine Mann with the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control was the individual who conveyed to me that regulations are presently being put together to restrict Canadian exports to Nicaragua. Other than being simply concerned, is the Minister prepared to say to the House and to the people of Canada, if it is the case that Canadian firms operating in Canada will be restricted in their export policy, that Canadians are quite prepared to take action on their own and do not need to be dictated to by the United States in terms of their export policy?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member knows, it is very difficult to respond to a hypothetical set of circumstances such as he has indicated. I can only say that if it would satisfy the Hon. Member I would have no hesitation in asking one of our officials to get in touch with the source to which he has referred, and at least learn more detail.