

Statements by Ministers

international financial institutions; that money will not be spent this year by the international institutions.

Mr. Lapierre: In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Minister is saying that it is nothing but funds which have been shifted around. He is telling us that those \$50 million in fact . . . He has spent the last two or three weeks juggling figures to come up with a total we can understand. If I consider the \$28 million he has mentioned . . . I would like to know which cuts he is talking about. And then, we have the \$13 million which he had cut, but he has now changed his mind. He should have announced today a \$30 million rather than a \$50 million program. I would like to have an answer to my question: is that so-called fund of \$50 million for one year, two years or for the rest of their mandate?

[English]

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear about the sources of the money. There was a reduction in the funds made available for Overseas Development Assistance by the previous government in the summer of this year during the election campaign. That reduction, much of it, has been restored to the budget of the Overseas Development Assistance, and \$28 million of that reduction has been directed toward the fund of Africa.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) on Thursday night announced a series of reductions, including some in spending within the envelope of External Affairs and overseas development. Of the amounts reduced from our envelope, in the neighbourhood of \$13 million has been restored and directed toward the fund for Africa. It has been taken for projects cancelled or delayed in the declaration by the Minister of Finance and has been put back now into the fund for Africa.

The remaining amounts of money come from commitments that Canada had made to certain international financial institutions, commitments which those institutions will not call on and will not need this year, so that money is surplus to us.

To be absolutely clear about what is happening, of the \$28 million that came back in the exercise that was revealed by the Minister of Finance on Thursday night in his declaration, that money was available for Overseas Development Assistance. We have made the decision that that money available for Overseas Development Assistance, will be directed toward the purposes of the fund for Africa.

Mr. Benjamin: None of it is new money.

Mr. Skelly: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) for a very dedicated and sincere effort on the trip he made to Ethiopia.

Would he respond to the questions raised by my colleague, the Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam (Ms. Jewett)? Particularly, is the Government of Canada undertaking activities that would bring some resolution to the civil war there so that resources can be applied directly to the need for emergency aid and longer term development?

My second question again reinforces the question put by my colleague from New Westminster-Coquitlam. Does the Government of Canada intend to become involved as a single nation in the longer term need for development in Ethiopia? Will the Minister be attempting to encourage other nations to join with us to try to find a long-term solution to that problem? What is the Minister's role as a co-ordinator for other nations in bringing more effective response for emergency food aid and equipment into that country?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, I will try to be brief in response. Let me say how much I appreciated the participation with me and the quick visit to Ethiopia of the Hon. Member and of a representative of the Liberal Party, and, if I may take the opportunity, let me say that it is our hope that when Mr. MacDonald returns to Ethiopia to carry out further consultations, there may well be interest on the part of representatives of the Parties represented in this House to be part of that delegation with Mr. MacDonald.

Let me try to take the issues in order. In terms of the civil war, as I have tried to indicate in the House, I have two observations. One is that there is no doubt in my mind from my consultations in Ethiopia that while the war is continuing, the priority for the Government of Ethiopia is to get aid to the starving. There is no doubt we have to make use of Oxfam and other non-governmental organizations that have a particular interest in getting money in through the Sudan into the so-called rebel areas. That is envisaged in this program.

In terms of the Brandt Commission, as I have suggested earlier in this House, we have some very real questions as to whether pursuing that initiative at this point in time would help or hinder the delivery of aid to the starving. Undoubtedly there have to be some means found, and we have to play whatever role will be effective, in helping and encouraging an end to that war.

In terms of long-term development, we have announced as part of this project the extension of an important water project. During that period of extension we will be looking to see whether there will be other water projects in Ethiopia that also can be made effective.

We have announced in the statement today the funding of significant cereal and bean projects in Ethiopia and elsewhere. We will be looking for others that will contribute in similar ways to long-term stability and to the avoidance of famine and drought in that area.

As concerns our relations with other countries, I have written, as I have indicated, to the foreign ministers of the summit countries. We are working through the United Nations both in New York and in Ethiopia. Many of the non-governmental organizations with whom we are working are themselves international. I certainly will look for and take advantage of any useful opportunity that arises for Canada to bring greater co-ordination to the effort in Ethiopia. Let me say also that one of the aspects of this breathtaking Canadian response has been the degree to which non-governmental organizations in Canada, which have not always worked well