

Area Program Summaries

say that it is absolutely ridiculous to come to members of parliament and ask them to fulfil their legal responsibilities by voting for money without giving them the information they need.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roche: Let me say a word about confidential matters. I am positive, and speak with some assurance, when I say that if the government or members of CIDA had come to the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich, to the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner) or to me and said, "Look, these are the reasons why these papers cannot be brought into the House" we, as reasonable men, would have said, "All right." But they did not do this. CIDA has not told members on my side of the House why these papers cannot be brought forward. Therefore, we are forced to come to the conclusion that the production of the papers would be a source of embarrassment to CIDA and, possibly, to the government. That, of course, makes it all the more incumbent upon us to press for material which will enable us to fulfil our responsibilities.

I make it clear that I have no desire to hurt CIDA. I have no desire to participate in this debate in a partisan way. I do not want to hurt the ongoing program. Indeed, I want to help it. I know that the speech I am now making will be carefully read by the senior management of CIDA. I say to the senior management of CIDA that the way CIDA is presently being operated involves a certain element of risk with regard to the future of CIDA and, in the next fiscal year, to future programs of CIDA. I say this as CIDA treats members of parliament as people one cannot trust and to whom the organization will not give information.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roche: The new subcommittee on international development is about to begin its work on the new economic order as passed by the seventh special session of the United Nations General Assembly. This, of course, is to be conjoined to Canada's own five-year strategy for international development co-operation. Never before in the history of parliament has there been greater need for a more penetrating and responsible study of Canada's role in international development.

I and other members of the subcommittee want to participate in a non-partisan way in the complete examination of everything involving our relations with developing countries, and CIDA is but one part of this process. We must be able to relate CIDA programs to the multi-dimensional strategy of the five-year program which involves commodities, trade liberalization and industrial co-operation. It will be impossible for this committee to work effectively unless it does its work in a good, non-partisan spirit based on information of what CIDA is doing and what its future plans are.

In conclusion, I say that CIDA is gambling; it is taking a risk. I suggest that CIDA is taking a reckless gamble; it is ignoring members of parliament who will serve on the subcommittee and who have a special responsibility to examine and support the government's five-year strategy. This, of course, is one of the most important things this government has done during the past year, even though the matter has not yet come forward for debate in this

[Mr. Roche.]

House. But it will be debated some time during the next few months. This work relates to the most important problem in the world, global survival. The question involves narrowing the gap between the rich and the developing nations.

Unless CIDA enables us to participate in a way which will allow us to contribute constructively to the government's policy, CIDA risks alienating public support for programs which it wishes to grow and become more meaningful. On our side of the House we stand ready to support those programs, but we will not sit here and be rolled over, as it were, by a government which refuses to produce necessary documents.

The parliamentary secretary suggested that there are reasonable limits governing the production of papers. I suggest that the government itself is transgressing those reasonable limits. We are being reasonable. We need those papers which will help us to do our job. We need them if we are to examine CIDA's programs. It is an organization we wish to continue supporting.

[Translation]

Miss Monique Bégin (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, first I wish to thank briefly the sponsor of the motion, the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro), for the kind wishes he extended to me on the 16, when he stated why this motion was being moved. But I was somewhat disappointed when he offered his co-operation provided I would table the papers.

I will now offer him mine, provided he withdraws his motion in a moment. But before I deal directly with the motion, I would like to point out the inaccuracies—not to say unfair comments—voiced on the 16 and also the chafings suggested to me by the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche) a while ago.

[English]

On October 16, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. McKenzie), speaking in support of the motion requesting the disclosure of documents from CIDA with respect to the regional program, that is, with respect to the area by area summary of programs throughout the world, said things that are grave accusations. I wish to set the record straight and to correct some of his remarks, as I think it is important to do so. He quoted extensively from reports printed in newspapers, some of which had been printed as long ago as last January. That surprised me. I think the hon. member ought to have been more aware of the general level of CIDA projects. He should have kept pace with the changing world.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (London East)): Order, please. It being 5.30 p.m., pursuant to the special order made this day it is my duty to interrupt the debate and forthwith put the question on motion No. 15.

All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (London East)): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.