

the people of Canada? Is that not really a shocking concealment of the expenditures of the government?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, the hon. member for York-Peel is always shocked by everything he does not understand.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1425)

Mr. Johnston: I will verify the hon. member's arithmetic, as I normally do, and I will be happy to respond to any specific questions on Thursday morning before the miscellaneous estimates committee.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF FORMER GOVERNOR GENERAL MICHENER AND OF PREMIER BUCHANAN OF NOVA SCOTIA

Madam Speaker: It is with great pleasure and gratitude for the honour he does to us that I draw the attention of the House to the presence in our gallery of a former Governor General and former Speaker of this House, His Excellency Mr. Roland Michener, and Mrs. Michener.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: I also draw attention to the presence in our gallery of the Premier of Nova Scotia, Mr. John Buchanan.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

EL SALVADOR—CANADIAN INFLUENCE ON INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Mr. Bob Ogle (Saskatoon East): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Secretary of State for External Affairs I will direct my question to his parliamentary secretary. It is further to the situation in El Salvador, which was debated seriously and well in this House of Commons yesterday. I feel that the members of this House and the people of Canada would give strong support to the positions that we proposed with regard to stopping military assistance to that country. I wish to ask the parliamentary secretary how the Government of Canada is going to influence the international community in a positive way to bring about a political solution in El Salvador, as other countries such as Mexico and West Germany are proposing?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Louis Duclos (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is right in saying that we had a serious debate on the problems in El Salvador, but I would like to point out that it is certainly not by attacking our neighbours and best allies, the United States, that we will make a useful contribution toward improving the present situation in El Salvador. In this regard, Madam Speaker, I believe that the motion introduced yesterday was unfortunately unbalanced and rather incomplete, which prevented us from agreeing to it. The Secretary of State for External Affairs has made it clear on several occasions to representatives of the El Salvador government, both to the Salvadorian ambassador in Ottawa and through our own ambassador in Costa Rica, that we greatly deplore the violation of human rights in that country. Unfortunately, as long as arms reach that country from other sources, we cannot attack the American government exclusively on this matter.

[English]

CUTBACK IN CANADIAN AID

Mr. Bob Ogle (Saskatoon East): Madam Speaker, I was not attacking the American government. I was asking for positive responses from the Canadian government with regard to establishing a peaceful zone. I understand from this morning's news that the government has cut back on its aid to El Salvador. In the recent past there were similar circumstances, in Zimbabwe for example, where the people were rising up to control their own future. Will the parliamentary secretary explain how Canada will approach its very serious role in North-South relations as it relates to aid to that country?

[Translation]

Mr. Louis Duclos (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the hon. member says that he is not attacking the American government, but that was essentially the purpose of the resolution or motion introduced in the House yesterday. As for any cut back in Canadian assistance to El Salvador, Madam Speaker—I would like to have a bit of silence, Madam Speaker. If the hon. members do not want an answer, I shall simply sit down and shut up. As for our reduced assistance, I must point out that we are criticized when we maintain our level of assistance in similar situations. Canada will continue to play its role through the usual channels, and these are not problems which can be solved through spectacular debates in a public forum.

● (1430)

[English]

Mr. Ogle: Madam Speaker, I am afraid the parliamentary secretary has the wrong page in his briefing notes.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!