

four more years to graze on Liberal promises and predictions.

Mr. Dinsdale: Pretty thin fare.

Mr. Wagner: "Cynicism" is too kind a word, "dishonesty" too trite, yet we must look at these words when those of us concerned about this nation's foreign aid program, both as it relates to our over-all economic situation and our over-all world responsibility, seek to probe the apparent lack of government preparedness to come clean and put its cards on the table.

With reference to the recently announced loan to Cuba, which we should note was made on the terms of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) as opposed to the terms of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen), it is surely appropriate to ask whether within the western hemisphere and within the group of nations in need of our aid Cuba must come first. While this party has never opposed closer trade relations with the Cuban people, is it now to be government policy that CIDA acts as an instrument of our trade interests? If so, does this now represent a new mandate for CIDA, a new departure, something totally unrelated to its responsibilities in the area of foreign aid?

The question we have to probe more deeply is whether those who administer CIDA and those who, through their complacency, allowed the administration to proceed as it has, are now choosing to alter the role of CIDA without altering its mandate. If so, why has parliament not been consulted on this change? We hear all too often of developing nations harbouring deep resentment against wealthier nations which always have at least one ulterior motive in their aid programs, namely, the reinforcement of trade prospects. If CIDA is now to become an agency operating for the sole purpose of advancing our own trade prospects, then we risk losing the good faith and trust so necessary on the part of recipient nations if the programs that are Canadian tax-shared are to be supported.

Mr. Speaker, what are CIDA's criteria for aid? How does CIDA define need? Does it relate to some objective assessment of our national interest and, above all, the interest of the developing nations; or does it relate to the personal preferences of the president of CIDA? Would our decisions stand up to public and international scrutiny; or is it known that to gain this country's favour one need impress only one man, the president of CIDA? What does that say about this government and our country? What does that say about the international reputation of this nation and perceived public values?

When we have an agency which spends more than all but two departments, when we have an agency which reports through a public servant to cabinet and not through an elected minister, when we have an agency that remains undefended by this government against direct, incriminating allegations, we have more than a gap in credibility; we have simply a gap in good faith, which is surely a basic commodity in even this government's approach to external aid and parliamentary participation in that aid.

It may be that the Secretary of State for External Affairs is as helpless in this matter as prime ministerial officials have rendered him in other matters. Nevertheless,

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what I know to be his sincere and deep commitment to international aid must surely be sufficient to spur him both as a parliamentarian and as a citizen to see the merits of our motion and to reassert his responsibility in this area by supporting it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wagner: The minister may well wonder what difference all this may have to the long-term objectives of his department in the area of external policy for this nation. No doubt aides and departmental advisers have urged him to treat this motion as a tempest in a teapot, an opposition ploy to place the government in some difficulty. I say to the minister that the foreign policy of this country, whether it relates to foreign aid, national security or international peace, is the domain of all Canadians and therefore the domain of this House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wagner: I say to him that he should understand how deeply Canadians want an opportunity to be involved in the development of foreign policy through their representatives in this House, an opportunity which previous ministers have denied them in favour of the mandarins and the unseen advisers. I say to the minister that foreign aid is at the core of this nation's social responsibility at the international level; therefore, the administration of that aid touches upon the integrity of all Canadians not only as Canadians but as human beings in the community of man. It will be sad and disappointing if this minister and this government oppose a motion affirming this integrity and this responsibility.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, about \$733 million will have been spent in 1974-75, according to CIDA's most recent annual report which will soon be published, and once the 1975-76 fiscal year is over, probably around \$900 million will have been spent. The government would like to restrict our questions and to restrict information available to the public to two or three sittings of the external affairs committee and to the testimony of the chairman and a few advisors of CIDA.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian public must know what is going on in CIDA. This involves its money and its sharing commitment with the third world. Its elected representatives must be kept informed, since their mandate is involved. The press itself, which reports the activities of this Parliament, must be thoroughly familiar with the orientation, operation and decisions of CIDA. Their role is involved.

Neither my colleagues nor myself will be accomplices of the government's secretive policy in this matter.

A budget of nearly 1 billion dollars cannot and can no longer be the responsibility, for all practical purposes, of a single high executive, however intelligent or cultured he may be. Political choices as important as the sharing of Canada and Canadians with their brothers of the world, at a time when tens of millions of children over the world are to die from starvation within twenty-odd years, we are told, such political choices must not and must no longer be the exclusive province, for the essential, of one official