

*Oral Questions***EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****POLAND—RESPONSE BY NATO COUNTRIES TO THREAT OF
RUSSIAN INTERVENTION**

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. He will remember that on Monday I asked him if it was the government's intention to meet with other member countries of the NATO alliance to formulate a western alliance response to the growing threat of Soviet intervention in Poland. At that time the minister dismissed the need for any talks by the NATO countries, but I am sure that even the minister would have to admit that the threat to Poland from Soviet intervention is growing daily.

● (1140)

Given the concern that is being expressed now in western European capitals and in the United States, and given the statement yesterday out of Moscow that the U.S.S.R. will not tolerate chaos in Poland, I should like to ask if he has since been in touch with his NATO counterparts and what action the Canadian government is contemplating, or is he just going to remain silent in the face of this grave threat by the Soviet Union to Poland and to world peace?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, it is certainly common ground between us and, I think, in all of the western world, that the situation in Poland is serious and is of great concern to all of us. But surely the hon. member realizes that the solution to the problem is not for some dramatic action by the western powers which could be interpreted to be the very kind of intervention that we are telling the Soviet Union it does not have the right to engage in. This is a matter for the Poles to solve, not for the rest of the world to solve. That has been our consistent position. This is a Polish problem, and we want all countries in the world to keep their hands off Poland.

ACTION TAKEN BY CANADA

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question to the minister is with regard to the threat to Poland from the Soviet Union, not within Poland itself. Surely he will have seen reports yesterday that the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact manoeuvres in Poland, which were to have concluded yesterday, have now been extended indefinitely. He will have heard the report, I am sure, that Moscow has said it will not tolerate chaos in Poland and reported this week that Polish and Soviet soldiers were capable of issuing a suitable rebuff to hostile ideological diversions.

Given that kind of threat to Poland and given the statement by the minister in December that his government's policy is clearly one that there will be a strong and appropriate reaction to any intensification of the crisis with respect to Poland, I should like to ask the minister what that reaction is? What is he prepared to do? Is he prepared to try to work out some kind of collective action with the other members of NATO, or will

he remain silent, as he seems to be doing? Will he just take no action in this regard? Will he not understand the gravity of the situation?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, as I said, this is a matter of great concern to all of us. We are in touch all the time, through NATO, with all of our partners in the western alliance. I want to assure the House and tell the hon. member that this government puts the peace of the world and the freedom of the Polish nation ahead of political posturing.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**CONTROL OF ACID RAIN IN UNITED STATES**

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. In view of the fact that the Canada-U.S. memorandum of intent on acid rain, signed in Washington last summer, committed both countries to enforcing vigorously existing environmental laws, does the minister interpret that commitment to mean that the Reagan administration is not now free to weaken substantially environmental laws to control acid rain-causing emissions?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment): Madam Speaker, I am not sure if I exactly seized the intention of the question. It is true that we are pressing ahead vigorously with the United States to conclude an international agreement on trans-boundary air quality. Those negotiations are proceeding on track. We expect and the United States expects to begin the formal stage of those negotiations early this summer or late this spring.

I shall be in Washington on Monday to meet with the Secretary of the Interior to explore with him the American views in relation to that agreement as well as in relation to the Clean Air Act and other environmental matters. We intend to maintain that pace. There is as yet no indication that the United States wishes to withdraw it, if I understood the question correctly, and if the hon. member is asking whether we feel that the United States will not be held to previous agreements. There is no indication that they wish to escape from such agreements.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF ACTION BY UNITED STATES
ADMINISTRATION**

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of the Environment. The Reagan administration has made it clear this week that it plans to weaken, quite substantially, the U.S.