

*Oral Questions*

to the dictatorship of small minds coming out of the Ministry of Finance and that he will stand up for Canada's reputation as a country committed to overseas development assistance?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, while we are talking about the credibility of Canada in foreign policy, I must make reference again to the shameful display this morning by members of the New Democratic Party when, for simple partisan reasons, they prevented the discussion in this House of Commons of an important foreign policy statement with regard to Indo-China and Cambodia.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** The hon. member will well know that of the major industrialized countries, the G-7, Canada is second only to France in terms of the proportion of money we make available to official development assistance.

The member will know that in terms of forgiveness of debt, in terms of moving to an all-grant basis, in terms of taking initiatives whether they are in Indo-China or in Central America or in Africa or anywhere else, this government has very often and consistently taken the lead in the world. We intend to continue to do that and we intend to maintain the capacity to do that.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona):** Mr. Speaker, the minister does himself a disservice by misrepresenting what happened here this morning. He knows that it was a motion moved by his colleague which prevented him from making the statement that he wanted to make.

Does the Secretary of State for External Affairs not realize that the very reputation which he referred to in his answer, without answering the question that I asked him about the cuts, is the very thing that all of us want to preserve? I ask him to answer the question. Will he stand up to the pressure that is being put on his department to cut back funds to overseas development assistance? Will he get up in the House today and say that there will be no cut-back and that if there is, he will have the decency to resign in protest?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has not come through so clearly since he stopped wearing a microphone.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** The Official Opposition today was prepared to let me make the statement on Cambodia. I wonder if I might have the unanimous consent of the House, specifically the New Democratic Party, to table and have appended to *Hansard* the statement that I would have made today about Canada's initiative, including an aid initiative in Indo-China, an opportunity that was lost because the New Democratic Party wanted to play politics rather than get on with the foreign policy of this country.

**Some hon. members:** No!

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**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. J.W. Bud Bird (Fredericton—York—Sunbury):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of the Environment.

The proposed fixed link crossing, the bridge to Prince Edward Island, would be a major infrastructure investment of almost \$1 billion, one which a majority of Islanders and most other Canadians feel would be a big boost to both Prince Edward Island and to the Atlantic region. Certainly if it were feasible to do, it would be a most timely investment for all concerned in present circumstances.

I understand that the project as proposed would be self-financing over 35 years and in fact would eventually eliminate even the federal ferry subsidies which currently exist. Of major concern to all is that the crossing structure project be environmentally sound. It has been under study by an environmental review panel whose report I understand was supposed to be with us by September 1989.

My question is this: What is the present status of that review, when will it be received and can it be intensified and accelerated in light of current economic needs?

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his excellent question.

**Mr. Speaker:** We were all anticipating that start to the response.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!