

terrorism, or does the delegation intend to remain silent as the Government has been for so many weeks?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): That matter has been discussed and the Secretary of State for External Affairs is at those meetings.

IMPOSITION OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what that is supposed to tell us. We have the Prime Minister in the House so let me try him again. Will he undertake immediately, today, to impose full economic sanctions against Libya and once again show the kind of leadership in the international arena for which Canada has been respected in the past?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, that is a remarkable suggestion coming from a political Party which, until yesterday, had said absolutely nothing or very little to support this Government when we brought in, last January 10, the strongest economic sanctions against Libya taken by any Government of Canada, to the best of my knowledge. On January 10 we began building a strong set of economic sanctions against Libya because we took the view that terrorism was an unacceptable evil and had to be dealt with.

We believed at that time that supporting the U.S. in a series of economic sanctions would be the best way to proceed. It turned out that that did not find favour with a number of allies. However, Canada persisted in that view and supported the notion that this was an excellent first step to be taken along the diplomatic and economic route. That step having failed, other steps were taken by the U.S. Those have been discussed by myself and the Deputy Prime Minister.

SAFETY OF CANADIAN CITIZENS IN LIBYA

Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls—White Bay—Labrador): Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up with the Prime Minister on the topic of the safety of Canadians in Libya. Our consular representative has said that he has been inundated with phone calls from Canadians concerned about the critical situation, yet he knows of no plans to evacuate them. We understand there are three Hercules aircraft in Lahr, Germany, which could be used to evacuate Canadians from Libya. Can the Prime Minister confirm that is so and, if it is, has he taken steps to put those Hercules on alert, and are there any plans to use those aircraft to evacuate Canadians who want to leave that country?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, first let me correct the hon. gentleman with respect to his statement that our consular officials in Libya are being inundated with telephone calls from Canadians expressing a desire to leave. That is simply not true. The Government has been in touch with our officials as recently as the last couple of hours and we have the direct assurance that there is no immediate threat to Canadians.

Oral Questions

With respect to contingency plans, as I said yesterday and have been saying throughout, it is not helpful to the discussion and would jeopardize the very plans themselves to discuss them openly in public. The hon. gentleman, having been a member of a previous Government, should know that.

EVACUATION MEASURES

Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls—White Bay—Labrador): That may be true, Mr. Speaker, but we can only go on the basis of information we have. The information we have from *The Globe and Mail* this morning says that Canadians—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rompkey: You have to get your information from somewhere if you cannot get it from the Government.

• (1420)

Our consul says they are becoming increasingly worried, and about a quarter of them want to get out—

Mr. Speaker: This is a supplementary question. Does the Hon. Member have a question, please?

Mr. Rompkey: If those Hercules are not going to be used in view of the situation, what are the Government's plans? Can the Government tell us what plans it has to evacuate Canadians in this serious situation?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the consular officials are not advising the Government in any way along the lines suggested by my hon. friend. Second, the airport is now either open or in the process of being opened for commercial travel.

Mr. Johnston: They will go by Wardair, I suppose.

Mr. Mulroney: The hon. gentleman from Westmount on a serious matter talks about Wardair. I can tell him that we do not do this frivolously.

Mr. Allmand: You didn't show up for two days.

Mr. Mulroney: I can tell him that we have contingency plans which involve the Government of Canada—

Mr. Gauthier: Tell us about it.

Mr. Mulroney: —to protect the security of Canadians, as opposed to these frivolous acts by the Opposition.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order.

EXIT VISAS INQUIRY

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Prime Minister and it is on the same general topic. The Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister mentioned two days ago that contact had been made