

*Oral Questions*

taken by NATO. That was the statement made by Secretary General Luns of NATO and by other ministers, and it was to those statements to which the Prime Minister of this country took exception in his press conference last Friday when he said:

I find it useless to speculate on what we would do if there was an invasion of Poland by the U.S.S.R. I find this type of speculation completely inopportune—

I find all speculation . . . very ill-advised—

Those were the statements of the Prime Minister of Canada after unanimous agreement by NATO members on the way in which they would meet Soviet intervention in Poland.

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**An hon. Member:** Speech.

**Miss MacDonald:** I should like to ask the minister whether he was aware of the Prime Minister's view before he agreed with the NATO members as to the stand which Canada would take; and did he communicate the views of the Prime Minister to the other NATO ministers before he agreed with their stand?

**Mr. MacGuigan:** Madam Speaker, the statement which was expressed in the NATO communique was not the statement which the hon. member had quoted, which was the statement made by the Secretary General of NATO and which was misreported here. The statement which was made by the allies reads as follows:

The allies would be compelled to react in the manner which the gravity of this development would require.

The other relevant statement which was made was that détente could not survive if the Soviet Union were again to violate the basic rights of any state to territorial integrity and independence.

There was a report on Friday, an entirely erroneous report, that the Secretary General of NATO had stated there would be military consequences, a military reply by NATO to any intervention in Poland. That was not what the Secretary General said, it is not part of the NATO communique, and it was not part of any explicit agreement which was arrived at by the foreign ministers.

**Miss MacDonald:** Madam Speaker, there seems to be a great deal of difference between the line which the Secretary of State for External Affairs is taking and that of the Prime Minister of Canada. One says yes, NATO agrees that there would be need for action in the event of Soviet intervention—and I understand the minister agrees with that—whereas the Prime Minister says it would be useless to speculate on action of any kind that NATO might take. I want to ask the minister when he will get together with the Prime Minister to find out exactly which line Canada is taking.

**An hon. Member:** Who speaks for Canada?

**Miss MacDonald:** Are we going to be backing our NATO allies on this question, or is the government going to be siding with the Prime Minister in his criticism of NATO?

**Mr. MacGuigan:** Madam Speaker, there is no problem with government policy in this respect. The 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. The position which the Prime Minister has enunciated, and which I myself have repeatedly stated in other forums since the NATO meeting, is that speculation as to the form that those reactions might take is entirely unwarranted. It would not serve the cause of world peace if we were to speculate in that fashion, and in fact it was agreed, because of the large number of scenarios which could possibly occur, that the NATO foreign ministers would be called together immediately upon an intensification of the crisis with respect to Poland. Therefore, in fact, Canada's position is clear. It is the same as that of other NATO states, namely, that the effect on détente would be incalculable, serious and destructive if there were to be any Soviet attack on Poland and that the consequences would be strong and severe; but there is no attempt to detail what those consequences would be.

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

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**AGRICULTURE****FUTURE OF CANFARM—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

**Mr. Jim Schroder (Guelph):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. Considering that the Canfarm co-operative program is recognized worldwide as the best specialized farm accounting software available to help commercial farmers with increasing business demands of the 1980s, considering that the federal government has already invested over \$50 million in developing Canfarm and has provided direct and indirect aid to Canfarm in the amount of over \$6 million, and considering that Canfarm has made substantial progress in gaining the support of farmers and accounting firms across Canada, I should like to ask the minister what steps the government is prepared to take to make sure that Canfarm, whose management technologies are in the forefront of this kind of activity, is not lost to the Canadian farmer and is not lost to Canadian agriculture in general?

• (1440)

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Madam Speaker, there are 350,000 farmers in Canada, and between 5,000 and 6,000 belong to Canfarm. As the hon. member says, it is a very good program. We had a meeting again this morning with some of our partners in financing. We met with the Canadian Co-operative Credit Society for over an hour and discussed new ways and means of trying to keep Canfarm alive; but if those who applaud Canfarm so generously would