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there may well be an opportunity and an appropriate role for the Commonwealth.

In participating in this debate tonight, I recognize the seriousness of the situation as justifying the existence of an emergency debate in the House. I commend those Hon. Members, whatever their views, who contributed to an examination of this serious situation and I express my conviction that there may well be a role for the Commonwealth in re-establishing peace and self-determination in Grenada.

● (2130)

**Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton-Strathcona):** Mr. Speaker, I intend to raise a number of questions and to make some points about this dreadfully serious matter. I will start by making the point that I wish I were as certain about anything in this whole matter as the Leader of the NDP seems to be certain about every aspect of it.

I would remind the Minister of State for International Trade (Mr. Regan) that, contrary to his expressed view that it is the Cabinet that should decide whether Canada participates in a Commonwealth force, in fact it is the House that should decide that question. I should have thought that he would respect the privilege of the House in making his points on that matter a few moments ago.

A number of people have asked where this Party stands on the Grenadian question. Consistent with remarks made by the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) I would point out that this Party as of now is of the view that it is too early to make a definitive decision on this matter. We do not propose to prejudge what happened in Grenada in the last couple of days. We do not know what happened on the days when those murders occurred, or we do not fully know. We are asking the Canadian people to reserve judgment on the matter until we have some answers, as I expect we will have shortly.

Let us see what results from talking to people like the Governor General, Paul Scoon, before Canadians and this Party decide what is in the best interests of Canada in this matter. Let us neither condemn nor congratulate anyone with respect to this; let us wait a little and see what the facts are.

The motion standing in the name of the Leader of the New Democratic Party makes a number of statements. I would take issue with the motion when it states that Grenada is "an independent member of the Commonwealth whose Queen is also the Queen of Canada". I would remind them that the regime of Maurice Bishop suspended the Grenadian constitution in 1979, that a week or so ago General Austin put Governor General Paul Scoon under house arrest, and that the United States only dared to reveal that it was he who had called for aid after he was safely out of the country. I agree with the Minister of State for International Trade that at the moment the Governor General would appear to be the most legitimate focus of government in the country.

I regret that the New Democratic Party has condemned the United States tonight without hesitation after 14 days of silence about the position of Canadians on the island of Grenada.

I gather that the Liberals are disappointed that they were not consulted about the matter. The United Kingdom was consulted, Friday, Saturday and Monday, I understand, but Canada was not told until the helicopters were in the air or landing on Grenada.

One of the aspects of this matter that is so serious to me is that the Caribbean states involved thought so little of Canada that they did not even consult us. As I understand it, none of them consulted Canada to see what advice we could give.

As a Member of the Party that I believe will form the Government of this country within a year or so, I also regret that the Department of External Affairs was so little aware of what was happening in and around Grenada that it did not apprise the Government, as I understand it, of events until the time of the invasion.

And last, Mr. Speaker, our best ally and friend, our major trading partner and one of the two countries with which we share this continent, did not trust us with information and did not consult us, as we were entitled to be consulted. I hope if something like this happens in the future we will be consulted. It seems to me that the Canadian Government has suffered a rebuff from the Caribbean States and the United States and from everyone involved in the tragedy that has occurred in an area where we used to think we had some influence and prestige.

I should like to refer to a note that I made last night of what the Minister of State for International Trade said on the CBC television program "The Journal". He said that his Government is unable to see any justification for this. I think that represents an overly broad generalization but we must wait to see whether it is borne out by the facts.

At this point may I give a perspective I obtained today from a member of the East Caribbean community. It is his view of what has gone on in Grenada. I do not want to reveal his name because I do not think it would be fair to mention it in this Chamber. He made the point that he, as a member of an East Caribbean country, thought that bulldozers, etc., were the stock in trade of people who were building airport runways. We heard tonight from President Reagan that a warehouse was found to be full of weapons and that there were 600 seemingly well trained Cuban construction workers and 30 military advisers on the island. My source from the Caribbean asked what the true intentions of Cuba were in building this runway and pointed out that 600 armed men could overrun any of the member states of the Organization of East Caribbean States.

The gentleman I refer to also expressed to me his profound concern about what 600 armed people could do in that region of the world. He reminded me that about a year ago a plot was uncovered in the City of Toronto of a coup to be undertaken against Dominica. That coup was fortunately stopped. He pointed out that 100 armed men could probably seize and take control of Dominica. He pointed out that those six States, three of which have no army at all, are terribly vulnerable to an armed takeover. That is why he and many other people