

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

INQUIRY WHETHER GOVERNMENT PROTESTED AGGRESSION
BY NORTH VIET NAM

Mr. John Reynolds (Burnaby-Richmond-Delta): I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Could he tell the House whether his government advised the Canadian diplomatic representative in North Viet Nam, John Small, to launch a formal protest with the North Vietnamese government against its active aggression in South Viet Nam and its failure to respect the cease-fire?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Reynolds: I have a supplementary question for the minister. Can he advise the House whether this is under consideration by the cabinet or if this has not been done under direct instructions from the Prime Minister?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, all such questions are under continuing review. The general attitude of the government toward this particular situation was made clear yesterday in a series of questions asked in the House.

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER AGREEMENTS FOR BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West): My question is addressed to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. In view of the pleasure at the extension of DREE grants in Kootenay West until the end of this year, and in view of the fact that there is a continuing expression of concern about the DREE programs in B.C., can the minister advise if any sub-agreements have now been signed or are proposed with the province of British Columbia with reference to the DREE program?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): I was very happy to be able to extend the designation in the area to which the hon. member refers. At the same time I held discussions with the appropriate minister in the government of British Columbia. There are three and perhaps four sub-agreements which are now being negotiated, but they have not yet been signed. I can tell the hon. member in a general way that one of them has to do with forestry development and another has to do with a number of activities in north-western B.C. and in the whole general northern area of that province.

Oral Questions

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR RESOLUTION CONDEMNING AGGRESSION BY
NORTH VIET NAM—POSSIBILITY OF PROTEST THROUGH
UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): My question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In light of his answers today and in particular his answers on January 4 and 5, 1973 at the opening of parliament when parliament approved a government resolution condemning the U.S. bombing in North Viet Nam, can the minister say—in view of the killing of women and children and the great inhumanity being perpetrated at present—if he would reconsider his position and put forward a government resolution condemning the Communist aggression that is going on now?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I recall the resolution to which the hon. member refers. It consisted of a series of propositions, including the wish of the House to deplore the bombing of Hanoi by the United States. It seems to me that no analogy exists in this particular situation.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Shame!

Mr. MacEachen: If the hon. member has in mind the attempt to draw a strict analogy between the two situations, let me tell him that they are not precisely the same. I say to the hon. member that I have already deplored the major offensive which is taking place in South Viet Nam, and particularly the effect that it is having on innocent civilians in that country. If the hon. member would look at that resolution he would find that my words with respect to this offensive are precisely the words that were used in the resolution to which he refers.

Mr. Woolliams: I would ask the minister now to reconsider what he has just said regarding the conditions being different. There are women and children being killed by bombs and Communist aggression. The minister has said that he deplores the situation. Is he prepared to formally protest, through the proper channels of the United Nations or to the Communist countries which are backing the North Vietnamese, this military aggression which is going on and which is causing this inhumanity?

● (1440)

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, in deciding what one ought to do in a situation of this kind, one ought to understand clearly the purpose, the effect and the worthwhileness of any particular action. I am quite satisfied that outright denunciation such as is suggested by my hon. friend would do nothing to relieve the human suffering which is at the present time the main Canadian concern. We have moved very quickly to alleviate that human suffering in South Viet Nam.

I would make this second comment to the hon. member, that another obligation which must be discharged by the Canadian government concerns the welfare of Canadian citizens now in territories controlled by the PRG, and that