

Situation in Cyprus

On November 22, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and, Acting Prime Minister, the Honourable Paul Martin, was asked: "In view of the very disturbing reports from Cyprus in recent hours, can the Minister give the House any indication of conditions there, and indicate what initiative his Government might be taking in order to forestall further deterioration of the situation?"

Mr. Martin replied as follows:

Mr. Speaker, as my honourable friend knows, some of the Canadian participants in the United Nations Force did run into some trouble with one group of the Cypriot population. The commander of the United Nations Force and the commander of the Canadian contingent of that force have registered protests, as has the Government itself.

With regard to the efforts being made to resolve the problem, which is one that has been causing concern, the Canadian Government has taken an initiative with two other countries. This initiative is now the subject of discussion with the Governments of Turkey and Greece. I saw the Ambassadors of Turkey and Greece last evening. Our Ambassador in Athens has had discussions with the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Greece within the past 24 hours. Likewise, our Ambassador in Ankara has had some conversations with the Foreign Minister for Turkey, and I myself have also been in touch with the latter. Our Ambassador at the United Nations has been instructed to discuss this matter with the Secretary-General, and the steps we have undertaken, if acceptable, I think will greatly contribute to the stabilization of the situation.

To a further question whether consideration was being given "to the position of the Canadian contingent in relation to measures to be taken to afford some protection to that contingent in the event the situation there should further deteriorate, creating further danger", Mr. Martin answered:

... Once the Canadian Government and the Parliament of Canada approve Canadian participation in a United Nations Force, the command and the course to be followed by that Force is determined by the Commander of the United Nations Force, on instructions from the Secretary-General and the Security Council. This will be the procedure observed in this case, as it has been in other circumstances.

As my colleague the Minister of National Defence pointed out the other day, contingent plans in this situation have been made. I should not want this last reply, however, to indicate that I do not believe an improvement has resulted from the efforts that have been made within the past 48 hours. I think the situation has improved.

A second set of questions went as follows: "I ask, first, with whom has the Canadian commander lodged a complaint (concerning reports of the mistreatment