

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

As far as our nation is concerned, red tape has been virtually eliminated, financial barriers removed and screening processes speeded in an effort to bring as many refugees to Canada as quickly as possible. Tomorrow, the twentieth chartered plane load of Czech refugees arrives in Canada. All these flights have carried from 130 to 190 passengers. They are men, women and families who, in my view, will become exceptional Canadian citizens and make contributions to this country far beyond their new numerical strength.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Perrault: Since the first flight in mid September I have ascertained that approximately 3,449 refugees have come to Canada, the majority coming under the auspices of the government's program which provides grants or loans to cover transportation, settling in and adjustment costs. Practically all those intending to enter into the Canadian labour force have been interviewed by manpower counsellors in offices across Canada. Altogether 1,102 persons have been placed in employment; and 800 are taking language courses and other training in English or French so that they may become better equipped to practise their professions and trades across this country.

As of yesterday there had been 11,241 inquiries from Czechoslovakian refugees interested in coming to Canada. Our information offices in Europe have received firm applications for admission from approximately 10,000 people, dealing with 150 people a day in Vienna alone.

The government has acted with compassion and generosity. If it were given the same opportunity and if it were unhampered by external barriers not of its own making, I am sure it would do as much and even more for the victims of the Nigerian conflict.

Mr. Forrestall: Let's hope so.

Mr. Perreault: Despite their agitated and impassioned observations of recent weeks, our friends in opposition are well aware of the limits, often severe limits, which exist and which prevent this nation from accomplishing all that we may wish to do in the area of resolving conflicts and relieving the suffering of the world.

We know, for example, how the fact of national sovereignty, a right we cherish ourselves, may frustrate our efforts to intervene constructively in the affairs, and indeed in the agonies of our world neighbours. Canada's contributions to the world are not a subject of

[Mr. Perrault.]

humiliation and embarrassment to any Canadian. Certainly they are not a subject of embarrassment with respect to Nigeria. Rather they are a matter of pride, as exemplified by our conduct in the Hungarian revolution as well as in the Czech crisis. I submit that in all these matters Canada's actions have been outstanding.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): What is the question?

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Loiselle (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, if my hon. colleagues would only agree to grant me the three minutes that—

The Acting Speaker: Order.

• (10:10 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): I rise on a question of privilege. The hon. member sitting at the end—I apologize for not being able to name his constituency—inferred that hon. members should listen, and sit down and learn something. I would draw attention to the fact that this period is set aside for members who are dissatisfied with the answers they receive from ministers. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has at no time mentioned any question asked in the house nor has he referred to the minister with whom he is dissatisfied.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think the procedure should be the following: I shall call on the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): What is the question? Which minister is he dissatisfied with?

[Translation]

Mr. Loiselle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Allow me to congratulate the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour (Mr. Perrault), whose constituency I know very well, for having raised the question.

The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. MacInnis) said that the ten o'clock show must be reserved for the members opposite who have some questions to raise or grievances to discuss. Why from time to time should we not congratulate the government for nobody can make me believe that the government is always wrong.