

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, October 20, 1971

The House met at 2 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

TABLING OF GENERAL EXCHANGES AGREEMENT BETWEEN CANADA AND SOVIET UNION

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table copies in English and French of the Canada-U.S.S.R. General Exchanges Agreement which was signed today by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union and the Prime Minister of Canada.

question about the agreement he has just tabled. Did Canada press for a provision in that agreement relating to the free flow of information between Canada and the U.S.S.R. and freer access by Canadian writers and journalists to examine and report on life and developments in the U.S.S.R., because if we are talking about cultural exchange in a meaningful way this surely includes—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Stanfield:—life in its many facets in both our countries, despite all the static opposite.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the agreement which has just been signed pledges both countries to facilitate exchanges on a broad basis, scientific and cultural exchanges, exchanges of all kinds, between the peoples of the two countries. This is, of course, subject to the laws of the respective countries, but I would think this agreement does mark another step forward not only in relations between our two nations but also to the extent that it indicates that the Soviet Union itself is prepared to see greater exchanges of the kind which I know the Leader of the Opposition as well as myself would like to see happen.

Mr. Stanfield: Perhaps the Acting Prime Minister did not hear my question because of the noise coming from behind him. I should like to ask the hon. gentleman whether in relation to this agreement the government of Canada pressed for some provision regarding the free flow of information between the two countries and freer access by Canadian writers and journalists to examine and report upon affairs and developments in the U.S.S.R.?

Mr. Sharp: The purpose of this agreement is to facilitate exchanges. It is to enable authors, writers, artists and scientists to exchange views with their counterparts in the other country. We did not, of course, press to change the laws of the Soviet Union. That is a matter, as I am sure the hon. gentleman will agree, for the Soviet authorities to decide for themselves. What we are interested in and what this agreement does promote is exchanges of information between the two countries and it therefore contributes to the purpose the Leader of the Opposition has in mind.

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

On the order: Questions on Order Paper

Mr. Speaker: Shall this order stand?

Some hon. Members: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand.

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

On the order: Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers.

Mr. Speaker: Shall this order stand?

Some hon. Members: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand.

• (2:10 p.m.)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CANADA—U.S.S.R. GENERAL EXCHANGES AGREEMENT— PROVISION FOR FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION AND FREER ACCESS FOR CANADIAN WRITERS AND JOURNALISTS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Acting Prime Minister a

CANADA-U.S.S.R. TRADE RELATIONS—RESULTS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH PREMIER KOSYGIN AND PARTY DURING VISIT TO CANADA

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): With regard to the visit of Premier Kosygin, can the Acting Prime Minister give us any indication whether any specific results have come out of the discussions between the representatives of the two governments in connection