

However, it is my understanding that at the present time the Indian government is directing its requests for assistance primarily to multilateral agencies. The United Nations high commissioner for refugees is visiting India to assess the nature and extent of the refugee problem, and we are awaiting a report.

Mr. Brewin: Has the government communicated with the United Nations high commissioner in charge of refugees and intimated its willingness to make practical assistance available?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, our general attitude is known to all of the international agencies. We have already offered token help through the Canadian Red Cross. We indicated to that organization that this was simply an indication that we are prepared to help as soon as we have requests indicating how we can best provide assistance. I want to assure the House, and I am sure that in this the government has the support of all hon. members, that we do stand ready to help substantially in this great tragedy.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs a question regarding the offer of assistance through the International Red Cross. I believe the Canadian government offered some \$50,000. I also understand that the International Red Cross has not been able to operate in Pakistan. I now want to ask the minister how that money is going to be used, and through what agencies?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I do not think I said, and if I did I would like to correct it, that we have made any assistance available through the International Red Cross. I understand that agency has not been operative in the area. We made our assistance available through the Canadian Red Cross. It is clear that the national Red Cross societies will be able to be effective, but not at the moment the International Red Cross.

Mr. Douglas: May I ask the minister if the Canadian Red Cross is operating in East Pakistan, or for that matter in West Pakistan, and whether or not the Canadian government intends to increase the amount of money which it is prepared to make available for refugee work in that area?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, as I reported to the House the other day, and as those who have followed the exchange of correspondence between the Secretary General of the United Nations and the President of Pakistan will have noted, the government of Pakistan has not yet indicated the extent of the need in Pakistan itself but has indicated that if any relief is to be distributed it is to be distributed through the Pakistan government itself. The help we have offered so far, and which was referred to by the previous questioner, is in relation to the refugees situated in India. This is the kind of relief on which everyone is concentrating at the moment.

Inquiries of the Ministry

YOUTH

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—ONTARIO PROTEST CONCERNING INFRINGEMENT OF JURISDICTION BY LEGAL AID PROJECT

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Justice if he has received a complaint from the Attorney General of the province of Ontario protesting that certain projects under the Opportunities for Youth program constitute an intervention into exclusively provincial matters and that there has been no prior consultation with the provincial government or its agencies?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): I have received a letter from the Attorney General of Ontario, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that some grants have been made by several federal departments and agencies to individual groups, involving legal aid. I recognize also that this involves the question of federal-provincial relations and the issue of the appropriate controls to be exercised over students participating in neighbourhood legal aid services. I am in the course of writing to all Attorneys General of all the provinces for the purpose of exploring what role the federal government should assume in the matter of legal aid. The letter received from the Attorney General of Ontario will be dealt with within that context.

OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—APPROVAL OF PROJECTS BY QUEBEC

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): I have a supplementary question for the Secretary of State. Can the minister advise if he has an arrangement with the province of Quebec whereby all such projects which involve exclusive provincial jurisdiction within the province must first be approved by that province and/or its agencies before they become effective?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Secretary of State): I am not sure that I have understood the question, Mr. Speaker. Is the hon. member referring to the Opportunities for Youth program?

[*English*]

Mr. Baldwin: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pelletier: In that case, Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes.

[*English*]

Mr. Baldwin: Are there such arrangements with provinces other than Quebec?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pelletier: Yes, Mr. Speaker.