

The established policy of the Canadian Government is to repatriate, if necessary at public expense, any Canadians in distress abroad. With regard to those Canadian citizens who are still in China, the Canadian Government takes as generous as possible a view administratively as to what constitutes destitution or distress among missionaries in China. In such cases the Government is always ready, upon request by a church order or society, to do everything it can to assist the repatriation from China of any of its missionary members. On receipt of this assistance the order or society is asked to give the usual undertaking for repayment.

It is becoming increasingly clear that Canadian missionaries and others have been subjected and are still exposed to mistreatment and injustice by the authorities of the Chinese Communist Government. There are no grounds which justify these actions which, indeed, violate all standards of decent international conduct. The Government, and especially the Department of External Affairs, have received both privately and publicly a good deal of advice as to what should be done to stop this persecution and to protect Canadian citizens. The difficulties in the way of action which is likely to be effective in this regard are obvious, especially when we do not recognize the Communist Government of China and must, therefore, request the diplomatic good offices of other states. But I can assure the House that we are doing everything we possibly can to discharge our responsibilities in this matter. I would add, however, that if we tried to intervene along lines which have, with the best of intentions, been advocated by some, we would not help the unfortunate Canadians concerned but might well increase their difficulties and, indeed, add to their dangers.

Economic Aid to Under-developed Countries

In reply to a question on December 15 by Mr. Coldwell regarding a press report that Canada had voted against a proposal before the United Nations for the establishment of a special fund to assist under-developed countries, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Pearson, said:

As I have not yet received a report on this matter from our Delegation in Paris, it may be necessary for me at some later date to amplify what I am about to say. However, I do know that this proposal, and the action taken by our Delegation in respect to it, does not mean that the Delegation or, indeed, the Government is unsympathetic to the question of technical assistance for under-developed countries.

We have already expressed that sympathy, both in deed and in word, at this Assembly. This particular proposal, which was put before a committee of the Assembly, was for the establishment of a fund of \$500 million by the United Nations which could be made available, under the procedure outlined in the resolution, for the assistance of under-developed countries.

The general attitude we have taken in this matter at the United Nations is that there is sufficient machinery for this purpose now, if members of the United Nations wish to use that machinery, and that it is unnecessary and therefore undesirable at this time to set up a special organization with a stated amount to be made available to it; especially as during the discussion of the matter the United States, which would normally contribute the greatest proportion of the resources which would be made available, indicated that it was opposed to the resolution, and opposed to the procedure, and would not be able to contribute to this fund.

In the circumstances—and I think these are the circumstances; but I will have to confirm this when we receive the report from Paris—we decided to oppose the resolution. At the same time we were in favour of an alternative resolution which would have once again pledged our support for the principle of assistance to under-developed countries. However, we were not in favour of implementing that support by the particular method indicated in the resolution to which the hon. member has referred.