

The second comment I would make is that I think it would be very useful if the House in general could give some consideration to the broader question as to whether the procedures that have been followed historically in this parliament and in Westminster with regard to budgets might be reviewed with the object referred to by the hon. member of having a more open scrutiny of the government's economic and fiscal planning, and either in the context of that discussion or perhaps with a special reference to the standing committee it would be of value if we could review the budget procedures and decide whether the time has not come now to make such changes in Canada.

Mr. Stevens: In the context of the minister's reply, I was wondering if the minister would be willing to have his department make available to either members of this House or to a standing committee the actual forecast that they see for the economy in the coming months and years based on various assumptions with respect to alternative taxation and federal spending plans.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): It seems to me that the hon. member may well be asking to a substantial degree for a preview of the budget itself, and for reason of the long standing inhibitions we have had, I would be reluctant to be put in that position. I think the far more sensible course of action, if we want to have more open procedures on the budget—and I think that is desirable—is for the House to decide what those procedures should be and then to make the necessary arrangements, rather than doing it ad hoc.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

REQUEST FOR REPORT ON KEITH LATTA CASE

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Justice a question. I have given him notice of it. Is he able today to give a report on the Keith Latta case?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice): Yes, Mr. Speaker. As the hon. member knows, I received some time ago a petition for a new trial for Keith Latta on the basis that new evidence had been discovered by way of a statement from a Mrs. McCauley which came to light after leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada had been dismissed. As I informed the hon. member the other day, we had been endeavouring through my officers to interview Mrs. McCauley but she refused to be interviewed. Consequently I have made an order, signed yesterday, to the Chief Justice of Alberta under 617(c) of the Criminal Code ordering that the Court of Appeal of Alberta or a judge thereof take the evidence of Mrs. McCauley and advise me as to whether the testimony of Mrs. McCauley could be admissible evidence in the trial of Keith Latta and ordering that counsel for the Attorney General of Alberta and for Keith Latta be permitted to appear on such conditions as the court directs.

Oral Questions

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CUBA—SUGGESTED PROTEST OF ARMED INTERVENTION IN AFRICA

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. On March 25 I requested the Prime Minister in the interests of world peace, to send a message to Premier Castro of Cuba informing him of the concern of Canadians generally over the continued participation of Cuba's 12,000 communist troops in the African conflict, and the Prime Minister promised to give consideration to my suggestion. Six days have passed since I raised that question and tension in Rhodesia and other parts of Africa has increased. So I now ask the Prime Minister: Has the government of Canada formally protested to Premier Castro the presence of Cuban troops in areas of conflict in Africa and, if so, will the Prime Minister table a copy of his government's objections in this House?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I believe last time when I answered the question I indicated that protests have been made publicly by the Secretary of State for External Affairs and personally by me, in the presence of Premier Castro, to him. I also said I did not see any advantage in sending a telegram repeating what was already known to be the Canadian policy, and having expressed it personally to him I did not consider that an expression in writing of the same idea would be likely to change his ideas very much.

CUBA—PURPOSE OF LEASING DC-8 AIRCRAFT AND TRAINING PILOTS

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): My supplementary is again to the Prime Minister. Has Canada entered into arrangements with Cuba covering the leasing of DC-8 aircraft to that country and the training of Cuban pilots, and what is the purpose of these arrangements?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I answered this question, I believe, in the days after I returned from Cuba and said that there have been some charges of, I believe, Air Canada planes flying to Cuba long before Cuba's involvement in Africa, but when the involvement in Africa became known we modified the agreement to make sure that these planes would not be used by Cubans outside of their territory. In so far as the training of personnel is concerned, I have no knowledge of that. I doubt if there is any, but I will look into it.

Mr. Paproski: Can the Prime Minister say how many Cuban pilots Canada has trained and are they being trained in Cuba or Canada and for what purpose?

Mr. Trudeau: As the hon. member knows, there are trade and tourist relations between Cuba and Canada and charter planes are flying from Canada to Cuba and Cuban planes flying from Cuba to Canada—

An hon. Member: And Cuban soldiers flying to Africa.

Mr. Trudeau: When we sell or rent a plane for money, it is quite conceivable that we also undertake to train pilots to fly these planes. If the hon. member objects to that