

Inquiries of the Ministry

government of Canada, may I say that we are concerned about the involvement of any outside power in this area. We hope that this involvement will be minimized and that everyone will work toward a de-escalation of this conflict.

LEBANON—POSITION OF GOVERNMENT ON INVASION BY ISRAELI FORCES

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister of external affairs. Has Canada taken an official position or indicated officially any reaction to the recent Israeli activity in Lebanon?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have had representations from the Ambassador of Lebanon who called on me to discuss this matter. I took note of the views of the Lebanese government. As the hon. member knows, at the present time this matter is under discussion in New York. We are all interested in trying to de-escalate the conflict. That is what I said in reply to my hon. friend who asked the previous question, and I repeat it to the House as a whole.

These incidents are building up tensions even higher than they have been, and I think that we in Canada ought to be working to try to reduce them as best we can. However, I do not think it helps greatly in this particular connection to be taking positions with regard to particular instances. I think we ought to be dealing with the conflict as a whole, as well as the interventions made on both sides and the unnecessary violence accompanying them.

GREECE—CRITICISM BY COUNCIL OF EUROPE—CANADIAN ACTION

Mr. J. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Has the minister's department yet assessed the report of the special committee which reported to the Council of Europe on the question of the torture of political prisoners in Greek jails? If so, what position has the government of Canada taken on this question?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we have now received the report that was submitted to the Council of Europe, and this is under study. I shall probably say something about it when we have completed our study.

Mr. Broadbent: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister assure the [Mr. Sharp.]

House that he will hasten the study of the matter since the report is already some four months old?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, we have had it for only a very short time, but the report is a very lengthy document and deserves careful consideration by the department before any public statement about it is made by me.

AIRPORTS

TORONTO—GROUND TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT

Mr. Walter Deakon (High Park): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. In view of the fact that the Air Terminal Transport contract for Toronto International Airport expires on July 1 of this year, can the minister advise the House when a decision may be expected as to the renewal, rescission or otherwise of this contract in order to enable the drivers and other employees of the company to plan accordingly?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that question as notice in order to enable me to examine the existing contract. On the broader question of ground transportation, we will make a decision as soon as the report on this subject by the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications has been received.

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member for Hamilton West rising on a supplementary question?

TORONTO—ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW SITE

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Yes, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question which in a way is also related. With respect to the announcement that the minister made today, and bearing in mind that the minister has already indicated that he has been studying the question of a site for over a year and a half, I am fearful that the minister might take over a year to announce the site of the new airport. Has the minister any projected time within which he intends to make an announcement about an approved site, subject always, of course, to the participation of the citizenry involved?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, that is the most ingenious supplementary question of the decade. We will put ground transportation