

would ask the minister whether he will make a protest to the U.S.S.R. against this completely unjustified, by any means whatsoever, course that is being followed that today denies Canadians the right to speak to intellectuals who are not committing any offences but to whom in the past information has been given and returned?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the right hon. gentleman raising this point which has not been drawn to my attention up to the present time. I will investigate the allegations made and report later. If necessary, I will take appropriate steps by way of dealing with the matter.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I have just one further question. Does the minister say that his department has had no complaints along this line? I think he better review the file a little more carefully.

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STATISTICS CANADA

CESSATION OF HIRING AND RECLASSIFICATION OF PERSONNEL—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, in view of reports by the Canadian Press, could the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce confirm to the House that as a result of a directive within Statistics Canada all hiring and reclassification of personnel, including temporary personnel, was stopped as of 5 p.m. on June 4, pending the presentation of the forthcoming budget?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I have been told by Statistics Canada, regarding the number of casual employees and other budgetary measures taken, that these involve interdepartmental procedures adopted to ensure that departmental operations are kept within the bounds of the existing budget for 1975-76.

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● (1440)

PUBLIC SERVICE

POSSIBLE FREEZE ON HIRING IN ANTICIPATION OF BUDGET—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address this question to the President of the Treasury Board. Would the minister advise the House whether, in anticipation of the budget, a freeze on hiring has been put in place in a general way in the Public Service of Canada, and if so could the minister tell us to what extent that exists at this time in anticipation of the budget both in terms of time and in quantitative terms?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, the government has ordered no freeze in the number of civil servants other than the reduction provided for in the budget speech of last November.

Oral Questions

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF PRAIRIE FARM ASSISTANCE FUNDS FOR MINISTERIAL OFFICE IN REGINA—POSSIBILITY OF REPAYMENT

Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, while I have the floor, I would like to answer a question put to me yesterday by the hon. member for Red Deer. I am pleased to inform him that the funds of the Prairie Farm Assistance Fund are not used for administrative purposes. The secretary concerned was never paid out of the Prairie Farm Assistance Fund when she worked for the ministerial office in Regina. She did it as a civil servant and she has always been paid out of the same funds. There is absolutely nothing illegal in this procedure.

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[English]

IMMIGRATION

ENTRY OF DUTCH STUDENT FARMERS TO NOVA SCOTIA—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration and I hope the ear of the Minister of Agriculture is sympathetically tuned to it. A week has passed since I raised the matter of the inability of Dutch student farmers to come to Nova Scotia. I understand that as of one hour ago only one farm helper had been offered domestically by the Manpower Department to some 16 applicants in central Nova Scotia. This also affects the ridings of Dartmouth-Halifax East and Central Nova. Will the minister consider permitting Dutch farming students to fill what apparently cannot be filled in other Canadian ways?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the number of foreign students permitted to come in for temporary employment during the summer was reduced this year because of the difficulty our younger people are having in finding jobs. That is the principle behind this inhibition. I will look into the situation of the particular farmers to whom the hon. member refers as having continuing difficulties and will step up our efforts to find Canadians to fill those jobs, but it would be only as a last resort that we would bring in foreign students.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

REVIEW OF STRUCTURE OF FORCES—DATE OF COMPLETION AND POSSIBLE TABLING OF REPORT

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Defence which I would ask you to ask him. In his statement of June 2 the Prime Minister, in referring to the NATO summit meeting, stated very clearly that a defence structure review is presently underway. Would the minister indicate to the House whether that review of the Defence structure is being undertaken by defence officials