

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Macquarrie: That is something less than a convincing and comforting reply, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the minister if he has also protested to the United States government about the western tanker route which he told a CTV audience yesterday he believes should be rejected?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I have protested many times in the House of Commons and I understand my protests have been read in Washington. I have asked the Secretary of State to consult with the Canadian government on the subject and I now await the fixing of a definite date for such consultations.

Mr. Macquarrie: Do I take it that the minister on behalf of the government has not presented the Canadian point of view to the government of the United States?

Mr. Sharp: I think the hon. member has heard me many times in the House of Commons and heard me in Washington as well.

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, could the Secretary of State for External Affairs indicate the attitude he might or might not have expressed with respect to the east coast as a possible tanker route? Has he brought the same emphasis to bear with respect to the Atlantic coast?

Mr. Sharp: Perhaps the hon. member would tell me about this proposed new tanker route on the east coast.

Mr. Forrestall: You don't give a damn!

EAST PAKISTAN—REPORTED KILLINGS AND REPRESSIVE MEASURES—CANADIAN REPRESENTATIONS TO PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): May I direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs arising out of the disturbing situation in East Pakistan. In view of the fact that democratically elected representatives have been refused the right to take office and have been outlawed and in view of the reported killings on a very large scale along with repressive measures being adopted by the military government of Pakistan, can the minister tell us if the Canadian government has made any representations to the government of Pakistan, particularly with a view to preserving democratic government in that fellow member of the Commonwealth?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker; we seem to be a little less clear about the situation than the hon. member, but we are making inquiries. As soon as we can ascertain the facts we will consider whether any useful purpose would be served by making representations.

Mr. Douglas: The minister's lack of clarity about this subject is normal. In view of the fact that Pakistan is a fellow member of the Commonwealth, will the government of Canada consider making representations urging a cessation of the repressive military measures which are being pursued and an attempt to settle this matter by constitutional means?

Mr. Sharp: With respect, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the hon. member is oversimplifying the situation. If he were to ask me whether I think East Pakistan should separate, I would hesitate before making a definite reply.

EAST PAKISTAN—ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF REPORTED REPRESSION

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): I have a supplementary question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Has the government been in touch with interested governments with a view to offering international humanitarian assistance to the victims in East Pakistan?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we were in the midst of offering assistance to this country in connection with the recent disasters. We have not, of course, had an opportunity yet of doing anything more. The situation is still not very clear. I am sure the House would expect that before we intervened in such a delicate situation we should ascertain the facts and ascertain whether in fact our intervention would be useful.

EAST PAKISTAN—ACTION TO ENSURE SAFETY OF CANADIAN NATIONALS

Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk): I have a supplementary question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Can the minister inform the House what action the government of Canada is taking to ensure the well-being of Canadian nationals in East Pakistan?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker. As far as we can determine, all Canadians in Dacca are safe and well. We have no information about the situation in Chittagong or other areas. Before the recent outbreak of hostilities, some 40 Canadian dependents and others had already left East Pakistan, acting on advice given by the deputy British high commissioner in Dacca to the effect that those without strong reason for remaining should leave. There are still approximately 150 Canadians in East Pakistan and, in accordance with arrangements entered into beforehand, the deputy British high commissioner will include them in arrangements made for protection and withdrawal to safe haven should this appear necessary.

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CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

DENIAL OF CANADIAN TELEVISION PROGRAMS TO WINDSOR STATION

Mr. Mark MacGuigan (Windsor-Walkerville): In the absence of the Secretary of State I will direct my question to his parliamentary secretary. In view of the government's commitment to Canadian content on television, what action does the minister propose to take with respect to the recent decision by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to deny several Canadian television series to the Canadian television station in Windsor so that they can be sold to the United States networks for showing in Detroit?

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