

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): May I ask the Minister of Finance whether at the time of making an announcement in regard to farm improvement loans he will also be in a position to indicate to the house what the rates will be on the Farm Credit Corporation loans?

Mr. Benson: It is very difficult for me to announce this until the opposition shows a willingness to proceed with the legislation, at which time I will try not to disappoint them.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NIGERIA—SUPPLY OF ARMS BY RUSSIA

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the fact that a cargo of military equipment provided by the U.S.S.R. has recently been landed in Nigeria, has the Canadian government made or will it make representations to the government of the U.S.S.R. recommending that they should join with other nations in bringing about an end to the supplying of arms or military equipment to the combatants on either side, with a view to putting an end to the deadly conflict in that country?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): The government of the Soviet union knows the Canadian views upon the subject, which have been expressed very eloquently by the Prime Minister. I do not think there is any need for us to go any further than that.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, at this time when we speak so highly of the United Nations and what it has done may I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs what possible reason there is for the government of Canada to continue a sit-down strike against bringing this matter of a cease fire in that country before the United Nations. Is there any objection being raised by any country to bringing before the United Nations the matter of a cease fire between Nigeria and Biafra?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I have answered similar questions on previous occasions, but perhaps I could draw attention to the statement made just yesterday by one of the distinguished leaders of an African nation, who suggested that we should be very careful as a country not to intervene in the internal

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affairs of any member country, particularly one in Africa.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Then may I ask the minister, when did he develop this peculiar predisposition? He did not have it regarding the situation which has existed in Rhodesia. Why does he have it in respect to a situation which affects the future of the world so seriously?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think the supplementary question is argumentative.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): May I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether he looks under his bed for General de Gaulle every night?

[*Translation*]

CROWN CORPORATIONS

PRIMARY LANGUAGE OF SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. André Fortin (Lobinière): Mr. Speaker, since the present government has made bilingualism in the public service a priority, and in view of the Speech from the Throne and the new legislation on the official languages, I put on the order paper question No. 53—which was answered yesterday—about six crown corporations. I asked how many senior civil servants earn \$17,000 and more and I was told that there were 225.

I am coming to my question, Mr. Speaker. There are 225 English-speaking and 14 French-speaking senior officials.

I therefore ask the Prime Minister to tell me if that situation will soon change because it seems that it will go on for ever.

Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we have already indicated in what direction we are heading and what progress has been made. However, there is still much more to do, and that is why we will be very happy when parliament passes the bill on the official languages, because then we will be able to deal with other projects.

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister.

Yesterday afternoon, two constituents of mine presented themselves at the main entrance of the parliament building and were unable to secure the assistance of a French-speaking or a bilingual person; would the Prime Minister take the necessary steps so