

Oral Questions

Mr. Diefenbaker: However, the people of Canada would like to know whether the minister, who has apparently been in communication with the Arab states according to the public statements he has made, has informed them that the attack made on Israel by the Arab states was an act of naked aggression and one that cannot be justified under international law? Is that the opinion of the government?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): I have expressed a view which is widely shared throughout the world and which is based upon the observations of the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization, that the attack on this occasion came from Egypt and Syria.

Mr. Diefenbaker: What is the attitude of the Canadian government? Instead of a mealy-mouthed generalization, will the minister say whether the government made known its feeling that what has happened over there on the part of the Arab states cannot be justified under international law? That was the question.

Mr. Sharp: I am not going to compete with the right hon. gentleman in matters of international law. All I can say to him, and I am sure he would agree with this, is that this way of settling this international dispute is not likely to lead to useful results. He will agree with me that the fighting ought to stop and that we ought to get down to negotiations.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is just a generalization.

CHILE—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF
MILITARY GOVERNMENT—ASSISTANCE TO POLITICAL
REFUGEES

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question, also directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, has to do with another subject. Will the hon. gentleman make a statement in the House explaining why the government of Canada decided so quickly to recognize the new military government of Chile in light of the disregard by that government of the fundamental rights of many of the people of Chile? And did the government approve or will it repudiate a report of the Canadian ambassador to Chile justifying the military coup?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): I do not think it is necessary to make a statement in the House as to the reasons for recognizing the government of Chile. We were following a practice which we have followed, generally speaking, in the past. Indeed, far from giving early recognition to the government of Chile we were very late in the process; we followed the Vatican, Denmark, Sweden and other close friends who have just as strong a respect and liking for democratic institutions as we have.

Mr. Brewin: If the minister does not propose to inform the House as to the reasons for Canadian recognition of the new regime, will he at least outline to us the steps to be taken to assist political refugees from Chile by offering them asylum, safe conduct and assistance?

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Mr. Sharp: As the hon. gentleman knows, we have accepted in Canada a number of Chileans who entered the Canadian embassy in Chile seeking, I think the best word is, shelter. Under international law they are not refugees in the ordinary sense but they did come to the Canadian embassy seeking shelter, and they were given shelter in accordance with the standing instructions provided to all our ambassadors. They are now in Canada. We have sent an immigration officer from Buenos Aires to Santiago, and we have sent one of the leading figures in the Department of External Affairs to examine the situation on the spot. I think the hon. gentleman can be sure we shall act with humanity in these matters as we always do.

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● (1530)

[Translation]

POST OFFICE

REQUEST THAT PAY OF RURAL MAIL DELIVERY
CONTRACTORS BE INCREASED

Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to direct a question to the Postmaster General. In view of the increase in the price of cars and fuel as well as in the cost of living in general can the minister say whether he is considering a revision of the position of rural mail contractors as well as all categories of employees with the Post Office who move the mail at rates set several years ago? If so, when will the minister make known his plans concerning the required adjustment so those employees will be in receipt of salaries comparable with those of other categories?

Hon. André Ouellet (Postmaster General): Yes, Mr. Speaker, that will be done within two or three weeks.

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[English]

FINANCE

POSSIBILITY OF NEW BUDGET—MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. In view of the continuing high level of inflation and some evidence that the economy is slowing down and unemployment is rising, but more particularly in view of the fact that since that last budget we have had a great number of policies brought in affecting the expenditure pattern of the Canadian government, would the Minister of Finance tell the House today when we may expect to have a new budget?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I did reply to the hon. gentleman's leader that it was not my intention to bring in a budget at the moment.

Mr. Stanfield: That was three weeks ago.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): That was three weeks ago and the position has not changed.