

## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

VIET NAM—INQUIRY WHETHER PROVISIONAL  
REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT ADVISED CANADA WILL  
CONTINUE TO EXTEND HUMANITARIAN AID

**Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton-Strathcona):** My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Has the Canadian government indicated to the provisional revolutionary government in Viet Nam that Canada will extend humanitarian aid to the victims of the war irrespective of where they live in Viet Nam so that the airlift of orphans and children can cease to be regarded as a principal instrument of our help? If this communication took place, what was the response of the PRG?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** No, Mr. Speaker, we have not made any such approach to the PRG. We have no diplomatic or other relations with the PRG. We are operating through the recognized international agencies, and through these agencies it is impossible to have humanitarian assistance directed to the areas in need in that troubled country. I do not think the approach suggested, in the circumstances, is necessary.

VIET NAM—POSSIBILITY OF APPOINTING CO-ORDINATOR OF  
ASSISTANCE AND INCREASING AMOUNT

**Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton-Strathcona):** Recognizing the willingness of the Canadian government to work through international agencies, specifically the U.N., has the Canadian government appointed a co-ordinator of Viet Nam humanitarian assistance so that the government of Viet Nam, whoever controls it, will be aware of our willingness to spend that \$6.25 million announced previously for the good of people in Viet Nam, and will that aid be increased?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** With regard to the second part of the question, I indicated when the initial announcement was made with respect to the \$6 million plus assistance that we were assessing the need and future needs, and it may well be that we will be required to increase that assistance.

With regard to the first part of the question, I do not see the need at the present time of appointing a particular co-ordinator to administer this aid. We are in touch with the international agencies, and if the time comes when a different approach is necessary, we will consider it, but in the meantime we are getting our aid distributed in the most effective possible way.

VIET NAM—OFFER OF AID BY CANADIAN FRIENDS OF  
CHILDREN OF VIET NAM—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North):** Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the minister has been made aware, either by his department or directly by an organization called the Canadian Friends of Children of Viet Nam, that they now have undertaken by agencies to supply 100 tons of dehydrated food which can be shipped by commercial lines to Hong Kong and then by military charter flights into Viet Nam. Has he been made aware of that, and has

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he turned down that suggestion by that organization in Toronto?

● (1430)

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I would have to check on the specific organization but in these circumstances it is usually better to provide assistance in the form of cash. We generally urge interested citizens to provide cash, because it is certainly a more mobile form of aid and meets the situation more readily. In some cases, we find it difficult to provide economical transportation and it sometimes happens that transportation costs equal or exceed the amount of the physical aid that is being offered. In this particular case, I will examine the details and see whether there is anything that can be done.

**Mr. Woolliams:** One further question, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's answer. When he is investigating this I wonder if he would look very carefully at the suggestion of this organization which came up with three commercial airlines ready and willing to fly this food to Hong Kong from where it could be taken into Viet Nam by military charter planes. Has there been objection to this by his department because the Americans are working with the military charter planes?

**Mr. MacEachen:** No, Mr. Speaker, that would not enter into the picture at all. The hon. member has made a suggestion and I can assure him that it will be considered very carefully.

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[Translation]

## FLOODS

RECOMMENDATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION  
CONCERNING RICHELIEU RIVER AND LAKE CHAMPLAIN—  
GOVERNMENT POSITION ON IMPLEMENTATION

**Mr. Claude Wagner (Saint-Hyacinthe):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Following the report of the International Joint Commission pressing the governments of those two countries to act rapidly and put a stop to the damages along the Richelieu river and the shores of Lake Champlain, has the minister approached the cabinet or any of the departments concerned, to take action, and are steps being taken jointly with Quebec which suffered losses amounting to \$1.5 million in 1972?

[English]

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I know that the International Joint Commission has completed its studies with respect to the Richelieu river which involves considerations for both countries. In order to give a more authoritative answer I should like to consider the second part of the question more carefully.

[Translation]

**Mr. Wagner:** Mr. Speaker, I want to put a supplementary question to the Minister of the Environment.