

but the minister said he had an assurance which in fact he did not have.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): That is not what I said.

Mr. Stanfield: I think the minister should read the question. Perhaps his trouble is that he does not pay as much attention as he should to what I say.

Some hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister whether the attitude indicated yesterday by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate that it really did not make any difference when the irregularities were discovered, whether now or in several weeks time, meets the requirement laid down by the Minister of Finance in his budget which is that he would see that the consumer receives the benefit of these tax cuts. Has the Minister of Finance any way to assure us that failure to pass on the tax discovered in a few weeks or in a few months time would in fact benefit an anonymous customer who did not get the benefit of the tax cuts.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I do want to be assured that the tax cuts are passed on to the Canadian consumer. This is the reason I asked my colleague to monitor those cuts to see what the result is. When those results are presented to him and to me I am sure the House will want to be aware of those results. I again want to say to the hon. gentleman that I do take very seriously what he says and perhaps more seriously than the Canadian people did in the last election.

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IMMIGRATION

REFUGEE STATUS OF HAITIANS—ALLEGATION BY UNITED NATIONS CANADA VIOLATED PROTOCOL ON POLITICAL REFUGEES

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the serious decision reached by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees to study the possibility of Canada having violated the United Nations convention on political refugees, would the minister inform the House of the precise steps taken by his department to ensure that no Haitians who might suffer political retribution if they return to Haiti are in fact sent back.

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would not accept the preamble to the question.

Mr. Woolliams: No one accepts his preamble.

Mr. Andras: That is quite correct and probably quite wisely so, Mr. Speaker. The report by the news media of the statement by the Canadian representative of the United Nations High Commissioner is rather vague and a generalization.

I will be meeting with him very shortly. In the meantime I can only repeat what I have already said, that we

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are adhering to the principles of the statement contained in the United Nations protocol regarding refugees.

● (1420)

Any person who claims refugee status while in this country, whether here illegally or not, has his or her case reviewed on its merit in two ways, the first by reference to an interdepartmental committee on refugees, which includes as an adviser the U.N. commission for refugees' representative, and if that committee decides that the case has merit and the person is in fact a refugee for the reasons contained in the protocol, then that is the end of it and the person is landed. If, however, that committee decides that the case does not have merit under the terms of the protocol, then that person is denied refugee status but he or she then has the opportunity to make an appeal to the Immigration Appeal Board which has full jurisdiction to review this case as an independent judicial body.

HAITIANS—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION OF THOSE ORDERED DEPORTED

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Considering that the statement quoted in the press is not at all imprecise but very specific—I refer to the statement attributed to Mr. J. B. Lactot, U.N. representative of the refugee commission—and that he is quoted as having said “perhaps some of them should not have been” in reference to those who have been sent back, this sounds precise. In other words, he is making a judgment about those who have been sent back and, as he is quoted, he thinks a number should not have been so dealt with. I should like to ask, in view of the very serious consequences that might befall these people in their own country, whether the minister could undertake an investigation simply of those who have been ordered deported in recent weeks to ensure that none of his officials have made the wrong kind of decision in this regard.

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): That decision is not made at the second level by my officials—these are not my officials. The Immigration Appeal Board was set up by this parliament as an independent body with its own jurisdiction and authority to deal with these matters. These appeal cases have been reviewed by the board members who have decided in their wisdom that some of these people are in fact not refugees. I would remind the House also that it was the decision of this parliament that economic hardship is not a criterion for determining refugee status. I would point out that even the person whom the hon. member quoted used the word “perhaps”, and so, until I have spoken to the representative, and I am doing that very shortly, I cannot agree with the hon. member that the press report, or his version of the press report is in fact precise.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!