

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SUPPLYING OF ARMS TO SOUTHERN AFRICA—POSITION TAKEN BY GREAT BRITAIN

Mr. Stan Schumacher (Palliser): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It arises out of the situation where Great Britain has joined the bad example of certain communist countries, such as the Soviet Union and Cuba, in supplying arms to certain parts of Africa, particularly Zambia, thereby increasing tension in the area. Has the minister made any comments to the United Kingdom in that regard, or is it a case of silence being consent?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, on this particular and specific action of the United Kingdom government, I have not had any conversations with the foreign minister of the United Kingdom. I have had many lengthy discussions with him with regard to Southern Africa, of course, as recently as two weeks ago when we were in Pretoria together.

As hon. members of the House will know, the situation is most deplorable. While I do not propose at this moment to comment upon this action one way or another, it illustrates that it is tremendously important—indeed, of the utmost importance—that all parties seek a peaceful solution to the problem.

I think generally it is known that the Rhodesian raids of the last two or three weeks have been at the basis of President Kaunda's request for support. In these circumstances, it becomes a question of one side escalating, then the other side seeking some kind of defence against that escalation, and so it goes. This is the precise reason why we have all been urging the countries of Southern Africa to work toward a peaceful solution, not only in Rhodesia but in Namibia and in the front-line states generally.

Mr. Schumacher: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister said he is not prepared to comment on that matter at this time, and sort of indicated that the action of Great Britain is support for the Zambianese. Is he prepared to comment on this type of thing in the future, or in fact are we to see a build-up of more and more arms in this very sensitive part of the world?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, my reason for refraining from specific comment was that I was answering the specific question, had I discussed it with the British foreign minister? I have not; therefore, I would like to have more information.

My supplementary comments related to the general situation there. Obviously, it would be highly desirable—indeed, no one thinks more along these lines than the United Kingdom government itself—if no country was giving any arms to any of the participants. That is the answer in the long run. As long as we have the Soviet Union, on the one hand, Cuba somewhere else, and some other country somewhere else providing these various movements and various countries with arms, there will

Oral Questions

be a counterdemand by the parties affected. It is desperately necessary to bring this kind of escalation to an end. We must persevere in our efforts to bring about a peaceful solution.

When I have some more specific information on the United Kingdom action, I will consider whether it is useful or in any way helpful to the House to give a more detailed response.

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[Translation]

INCOME TAX

INQUIRY AS TO INDIVIDUAL EXPENSES TAX DEDUCTIBILITY PROPOSED IN FORTHCOMING BUDGET

Mr. Gaston Clermont (Gatineau): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Finance intend to follow his predecessor's example in preparing his budget by increasing the allowable amount for job-related expenses? That amount is now \$250.

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will merely note the hon. member's question, and if we decide to adopt certain changes, they will be announced on budget night.

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[English]

THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

GOVERNMENT POSITION ON PROPOSALS OF PROVINCES

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I begin my question by saying to the Deputy Prime Minister how commendable he has been today in the way in which he has answered questions. It is a model for others on the government side.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: All of us are deeply concerned about Canadian unity and the success of the dominion-provincial conference which is taking place. Can the Deputy Prime Minister tell us whether it is a fact, as suggested by the media, that the Government of Canada, in its relationship with the provinces, has indicated or will indicate a type of ultimatum concerning the Prime Minister's so-called constitutional plan with regard to the Queen of Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada and the Senate, to the effect that legislation will be proceeded with by parliament regardless of the attitude of the majority of the provinces which will be deeply affected by these changes if they are made?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I attended the early part of the conference this morning and heard the address made by the Prime Minister. I would regard his approach as being the very opposite of an ultimatum to the provinces. That