

Inquiries of the Ministry

However, just as soon as arrangements are made for the use of an airstrip we shall be glad to provide additional aircraft.

Mr. Brewin: May I ask the minister whether in view of present conditions in Biafra the consent of the Nigerian government to the sending of planes to that part of the country might not be dispensed with in the interest of humanity?

Mr. Sharp: I think the hon. gentleman misunderstood me. The objection is coming from the Biafran authorities, not from the Nigerian government.

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Is the minister in a position to tell us whether any Canadian aid supplies have as yet reached Biafra? If so, can he indicate their extent?

Mr. Sharp: The supplies we provided were first landed in Lagos. They have now been moved forward by the International Red Cross to areas to which that body has access in Nigeria. They are being used very effectively, I can assure the hon. member, for the relief of suffering in that part of the country. I regret very much, as I am sure we all do, that these supplies have not reached Biafra, but all the fault is not on one side in this connection.

Mr. Nesbitt: What are these supplies? Can the minister tell us?

[*Later:*]

Mr. Bernard Dumont (Frontenac): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

Could the Prime Minister say whether the government intends to intervene as concerns England—which he knows well—to stop the shipment of arms to the federal troops in Nigeria now guarding the Shell Company oil wells?

Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I should merely like to mention that the Secretary of State for External Affairs has already replied to this question, but that he might like to add something.

Mr. Dumont: Mr. Speaker, has the Shell Company contributed to the election fund of the party?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

REPORTED ACTIVITIES OF FRENCH OFFICIAL IN MANITOBA

[*Translation*]

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister recently criticized rather strongly some of the activities in Manitoba of a certain Mr. Rossillon, from France. Can he tell us whether the government has lodged an official protest with the French government concerning Mr. Rossillon's visit to Canada?

Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker, there was a meeting between officials of the Department of External Affairs and the French ambassador to Canada, and the Canadian policy is as outlined by me during a press conference some days ago. There is a cultural agreement between France and Canada, and we are glad that France is willing to promote the development of the French culture of Canadians. We wish it would do so through cultural agreements, and we made this known to the French authorities.

[*English*]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

INQUIRY AS TO STEPS TO MEET UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the absence of any reference to unemployment in the speech from the throne, and in view of the cancellation of the municipal winter works program, can the Prime Minister inform the house of the plans the government has to deal with the increase in the already high rate of unemployment which is anticipated to take place in the winter months?

Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker. There are many references in the speech from the throne to the many-pronged attack on the problem of poverty. One will be to ensure that there is increased productivity and, as the hon. member knows, there are already programs under way under our manpower department to attack the problems of unemployment. The whole purpose of the government is to replace programs which are a burden on the public purse and which are not as productive as the programs with which they are being replaced and will be replaced in the future.