

Protest Executions of Jews

national museums, which report constitutes a reply to the numerous questions put to me in the house in the last few days.

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**IRAQ—PROTEST FOLLOWING EXECUTIONS OF PERSONS OF JEWISH FAITH**

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am certain all members of the house have been shocked by the recent events in Iraq. The Canadian government, and I know many Canadians, are deeply disturbed by reports that 14 Iraqi nationals, nine of them of the Jewish faith, have been publicly executed on charges of espionage. As the Secretary General of the United Nations has pointed out, mass trials and executions are always to be deplored. They are, however, particularly abhorrent and dangerous when they inflame passions and stir up blind hatred. The Canadian government associates itself fully with the statement made by the Secretary General and with the action he has taken. What must be of particular concern to all of us at this time is the report that the Iraqi government is contemplating a further mass trial of 35 persons, of whom 13 are said to be of the Jewish faith, on similar charges. I hope this is not true. In addition to the basic humanitarian considerations, the Canadian government is profoundly concerned by the effects these events may have on the search for peace in the Middle East. Actions of this kind can only retard and obstruct the achievement of a just settlement in the Middle East. Despite the understandable dismay these events have caused in Israel, I would ask the government of Israel to refrain from retaliatory measures.

The round of bloodshed, violence, reprisal and renewed hostility in the area has gone on for too long and must be broken. It will only be broken by a peaceful and accepted settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute. The Canadian government strongly urges the great powers, which have a special responsibility under the United Nations charter, to ensure the maintenance of peace, to engage fully in the process of conciliation and actively to support the efforts of the Secretary General's special representative, Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, to bring about a just and lasting peace. The attainment of a settlement rests ultimately with the parties themselves, but the assistance of the great powers may be essential if the present deadlock is to be broken.

The views of the Canadian government are being brought to the attention of the Iraqi

[Mr. Pelletier.]

government through the Canadian Ambassador accredited to Iraq.

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, of course, like the minister and like the Secretary General of the United Nations we deplore the brutal killings in Iraq. The world hardly needs another reminder of the dangerous situation in the Middle East, and the urgency of a solution.

The recent proposals by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics deserves careful and sympathetic study by the United States, and of course other countries of the world, for unless the super powers of the world—to use an ugly phrase—can agree on a solution and guarantee peace in that part of the world, then no lasting peace is possible.

If it is not presumptuous of me, I should like to compliment the new President of the United States who, in a public statement he made a day or two ago, took what I felt to be a very sensible, calm and open-minded attitude toward the Russian proposal for a Middle East settlement. In the meantime we agnize with our Israeli brethren, and are touched by the further evidence of man's brutality to man; brutality, of course, of which Jews have borne far too great a share in man's history.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, of course we join with the minister and the Secretary General of the United Nations in deploring the mass trials and executions in Iraq. I want to congratulate the minister for having quickly expressed his protest against these trials and executions. Despite the fact that, as hon. members know, I myself am a Jew, I also want to support the hon. minister's statement urging the government of Israel not to retaliate in this case, as it has done in other cases.

It seems to me that the primary need in the Middle East now, as has been the case for many years, is a search for peace. Attacks and retaliation, even though the retaliation may be justified, cannot forward the cause of peace in that area. In speaking on this subject I cannot help but feel despair at the fact that the situation in the Middle East would not be nearly as dangerous for the peoples there, and for the peace of the world, were it not for the deliberate big power action of rearming, particularly the Arab states in that area since the June war, which has made them feel that they can again act in such a way as to wipe out the state of Israel from the Middle East. It is surely this rearmament of these