

*Inquiries of the Ministry***UNITED NATIONS****UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

—ASSISTANCE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question. It is, I believe, quite in conformity with your suggestion made a short time ago. A report appears in this morning's paper to the effect that Canada has joined with others in voting against a proposal before the United Nations to set up a special fund to assist underdeveloped countries. Many of us are very anxious to see more help being given to the underdeveloped countries, particularly in Asia, as a means of preventing the further spread of totalitarianism in that area.

Many of us too are supporting the rearmament program of NATO because we hope that some proportionate amount will be appropriated for the raising of the standard of living of underdeveloped areas, as a means of advancing human progress. Would the Secretary of State for External Affairs give the house any information as to why Canada opposed this particular suggestion?

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as I have not yet received a report on this matter from our delegation in Paris, it may be necessary for me at some later date to amplify what I am about to say. However, I do know that this proposal, and the action taken by our delegation in respect to it, does not mean that the delegation or, indeed, the government is unsympathetic to the question of technical assistance for underdeveloped countries.

We have already expressed that sympathy, both in deed and in word, at this assembly. This particular proposal, which was put before a committee of the assembly, was for the establishment of a fund of \$500 million by the United Nations which could be made available, under the procedure outlined in the resolution, for the assistance of underdeveloped countries.

The general attitude we have taken in this matter at the United Nations is that there is sufficient machinery for this purpose now, if members of the United Nations wish to use that machinery, and that it is unnecessary and therefore undesirable at this time to set up a special organization with a stated amount to be made available to it; especially as during the discussion of the matter the United States, which would normally contribute the greatest proportion of the resources which would be made available,

[Mr. Robinson.]

indicated that it was opposed to the resolution, and opposed to the procedure, and would not be able to contribute to this fund.

In the circumstances—and I think these are the circumstances; but I will have to confirm this when we receive the report from Paris—we decided to oppose the resolution. At the same time we were in favour of an alternative resolution which would have once again pledged our support for the principle of assistance to underdeveloped countries. However, we were not in favour of implementing that support by the particular method indicated in the resolution to which the hon. member has referred.

CRIMINAL CODE**CONVICTIONS FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT—
REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Justice, of which notice has been given. In order to assure the maintenance of freedom of the press and of radio, would the Department of Justice give consideration to amending the Criminal Code in connection with convictions for contempt of court, as against press or radio, so that in cases such as that in which the *Globe and Mail* was recently assessed the costs of the court for alleged contempt, by Mr. Justice Wells, a right of appeal will be provided.

Also, will an amendment be considered to remove the anomaly which would appear to make the law respecting contempt of court too strict, in that it denies press comment on a case after trial, until every accused has exhausted his rights of appeal.

Hon. Stuart S. Garson (Minister of Justice): I should like to reply to both my hon. friend's questions at the same time. We in the Department of Justice have been following with some interest the news stories and editorial comment concerning the action by Mr. Justice Wells of the Supreme Court of Ontario, high court division, who held the *Globe and Mail* in contempt. In that connection we have been giving consideration to the rather important issues which are involved in this course of action. The department has not yet reached any decision upon which government policy could be based that the present law should be changed. If there are any developments in government policy in this regard they will be announced in due course.