

Canadians, is a matter of deepest concern to me, and, I am sure, to all hon. members on this side of the House.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Clark:** I want to ask the minister a question with regard to the approximately 250 Canadian nationals who are now in Poland. The Polish government has stated that those who wish to leave are free to do so. However, because of the situation there, leaving Poland is a very difficult undertaking. I wonder, in those circumstances, first, whether the minister would inform the House how many Canadian nationals have been successful in leaving Poland. Second, have there been any difficulties experienced by Canadian consular staff in locating and assisting Canadians who are trapped in Poland?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, I am sorry that the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition tried to interfere with my right to speech in this House—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Beatty:** That's absurd.

**Mr. MacGuigan:**—by preventing us from having the kind of full debate in which many hon. members on this side would wish to join. The Minister of Employment and Immigration would have been only too pleased to tell the House what he proposes to do concerning Polish immigrants.

**Mr. Lawrence:** You interfered with my right to vote.

**Mr. MacGuigan:** We would welcome the debate on the subject, if the opposition chooses to use an opposition day for this matter.

**Mr. Epp:** Right now.

**Mr. MacGuigan:** The Polish ambassador telephoned me last night to tell me that he had heard from his government in response to my representations the previous evening on a number of subjects, but he replied to only one, that is, the cutting off of communications, which is contrary to the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. He informed me that from today—I do not know what point of today he meant—that telecommunications, both coded and non-coded, would be restored. When that happens, it will, of course, enable us to have a full exchange of information—

**Mr. Lawrence:** Why is there no radio contact?

**Mr. MacGuigan:**—with our embassy in Warsaw.

At the present time, we have no knowledge of any difficulties which any Canadians, consular officials or others, are experiencing in Poland, but we have no count of those who have left. It has been difficult for people to leave, but we have also been told that air transportation will soon be restored. That was stated in the message from the Polish ambassador last night. That should enable us to see people allowed to leave the country.

### Oral Questions

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker, the minister has said that he would be interested in full debate in the House. He knows there are no allotted days left this session. If he is genuinely interested in free debate in this House on the matter, I would suggest that he might make a statement on motions this afternoon, indicating the government's intentions.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Clark:** There could then be full discussion. We will await the end of the question period to see if the minister is forthcoming with that statement on motions to indicate whether he is serious or not in his request that the House have an opportunity to express its views on this very serious crisis.

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### IMMIGRATION

REQUEST THAT QUOTA BE INCREASED FOR REFUGEES FROM EASTERN EUROPE

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** My supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration and it relates to the situation in Poland. The minister stated that he would watch that situation very carefully and that if any changes took place, such as an international crisis, his government would "respond in a flexible and open manner".

In keeping with that commitment, I wonder if the minister is prepared to increase the present refugee total of 6,000 from eastern Europe. Some 35,000 Polish refugees are now crowded in Austrian camps. In light of the present situation those numbers can only increase. Will the minister take action to aid those refugees now by significantly increasing the quota, and by doing that on an urgent basis?

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

● (1420)

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, as the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition knows, we have been responding in a number of ways to the request and concern about applications for landing in Canada by Polish nationals. I want to indicate to him, and to other members of the House, that since we announced our special measures about two months ago we have already accepted close to 500 applications for landing directly from Poland. We have also given over 500 permits to Polish nationals already here in Canada. In addition, we have the special designation class which allows people to come directly from the Austrian camps. The Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition will know that we increased that number to 6,000 this year, which is the full capacity of our processing at this time.

I can also indicate to the right hon. gentleman, now that he asks, that just today I announced a further extension because of the difficulty faced by Polish nationals wishing to leave the country at the present time by applying to our embassy. We will now accept landing applications sponsored by a Canadian