

### *Chilean Refugees*

establishment. This is comparable with the approach taken to past special movements to Canada.

To date 20 people have arrived in Canada, 50 more have received their visas, and the applications of approximately 125 other people are being dealt with as quickly as possible.

Other countries have also been accepting people anxious to leave Chile, although they have primarily been granting entry to those seeking temporary haven. Our current understanding, according to UNHCR information, is that ten European countries have agreed to accept numbers ranging from 50 to, in one case, 600. In addition, four Latin American countries have evacuated a total of 1,000 people who were seeking asylum.

The situation in Chile is still changing and we will continue to monitor it, for future events will determine the number of people who, in the final analysis, may decide that the best course for them is to settle in our country. However, we expect that in total some hundreds of people will immigrate to Canada as a result of this situation, which will mean that Canada's contribution will compare favourably with that of other concerned countries.

In the past, individuals and groups have always rallied to provide local support and assistance in welcoming displaced people to their new communities and helping them to become established quickly. For these efforts many thousands of Canadians deserve special praise. In the case of Chile, large numbers of Canadians in church groups and other organizations have expressed their genuine concern in the welfare of those affected by the events in that country. We hope that again interested groups and individuals will join with the government in the provision of special assistance for these people by contacting their nearest Canada Immigration Centre or Canada Manpower Centre. Many of the individuals now coming forward are young, well educated and adaptable people who, with a little help, can be expected to add their contribution to the richness and variety of Canada.

**Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I should like to welcome the minister's statement with respect to the Chilean refugees. The matter has been in the public eye for some time and clarification was not only needed but was highly necessary. On that basis I welcome the minister's statement today.

Canada has a long standing history of accepting refugees, people who have had to leave their countries for political or economic reasons. This Canadian tradition has been based on two criteria, as mentioned by the minister in his statement. One has been the humanitarian consideration and the other, compassionate grounds. As Canadians we have taken the attitude that individually we have a responsibility to our fellow men and as a country we have a collective responsibility to help those who are less fortunate than we are. It goes without saying, Mr. Speaker, that Canada's international reputation in this respect is well founded and established.

I remind the House that many of us are descendants of refugees who had to leave their homelands at one time or another for various reasons. It was Canada that welcomed our forefathers and gave them the same opportunities that

[Mr. Andras.]

were afforded to those living in Canada, and so they were able to become part of the traditions we all hold dear.

With respect to the minister's statement in regard to the entrance of Chilean refugees, on behalf of my party I submit that the same principles of humanitarianism and compassion should be applied and must be brought to bear in this case.

As I stated in my opening comments, there are certain questions that must be answered but unfortunately they have not been answered in the minister's statement. One question in the minds of many Canadians today concerns the nationality of the refugees who are applying to come to Canada. Are they primarily Chileans or are there also citizens of Latin American countries other than Chile? We would also like to have assurances from the minister that all precautions have been taken and that checks have been made in every instance where refugees have been allowed into Canada.

I find it rather disturbing that in his statement the minister left open the question of the number of refugees coming to Canada. While it may be rather hard to determine the number at this time, I suggest that the minister must have a projection. Another question remains, to which the minister only alluded, and that is the number of refugees who want to come to Canada on a permanent basis and become part of Canadian society and the number who are looking to Canada only as a temporary haven. These questions should be answered by the minister, Mr. Speaker.

I suggest that every effort should be made by Manpower officials to prepare the refugees for employment in Canada. The services of the minister's department should be made available to them in the same way as they were offered so successfully in the Ugandan experience recently. Canadians welcome genuine refugees. I accept the minister's assurance that the government is satisfied these are people whom Canada can readily accept and who are willing to make a positive contribution to Canadian society.

I remind hon. members that as Canadians we are responding to a plea for help from one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations. I am sure all hon. members join with me in seeking a world in which the international refugee organization will have a constantly diminishing responsibility and role and ultimately will not be needed at all. Surely a refugee problem such as the one facing us today again points out that freedoms cannot be taken for granted but can only survive as long as constant vigilance is maintained and a desire for the preservation of individual freedom is the goal of all mankind.

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, for a long time we have been urging the government to treat the matter of refugees from Chile with a greater sense of urgency than has been apparent to date. We naturally welcome this indication that the government is now treating this matter with the proper degree of seriousness warranted by the humanitarian implications and the human tragedies involved. I cannot forbear saying, however, that up until the last few weeks when the minister sent the teams referred to in his statement there was a marked contrast between the complacency with which the