

Inquiries of the Ministry

by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in connection with a United Nations peace-keeping force in the Middle East, may I inquire as to the nature of the Canadian offer? Is one battalion now available or is a battalion ready on a stand-by basis? What is the extent of the offer?

Hon. Léo Cadieux (Minister of National Defence): I do not know any more about this offer than does the hon. member.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Cadieux (Labelle): I believe it would be preferable to await the return of the Secretary of State for External Affairs when no doubt further clarification will be possible.

Mr. Fairweather: May we be assured that Canada will respond to requests for peace-keeping in the Middle East or anywhere else only if they originate with the Security Council and after ground rules have been clearly established?

Mr. Cadieux (Labelle): I understand that such requests generally originate with the Security Council.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Will the minister advise the House whether he has been consulted by the Secretary of State for External Affairs to ascertain whether sufficient forces are available to carry out any commitment which the Secretary of State might make or offer to make?

Mr. Speaker: I doubt that the hon. member's question is in order when he asks whether there has been consultation between two ministers. Perhaps the question might be rephrased.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): The hon. gentleman gave us to understand he was not aware of the nature of the offer. My question, naturally, is: are there sufficient troops available to carry out a commitment of the kind suggested? It has been indicated that there are not.

Mr. Cadieux (Labelle): Even though you did not allow the question, Mr. Speaker, perhaps you will permit me to answer it. I would say there are sufficient troops to take care of the kind of operation envisaged. We have discussed on many occasions—the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Minister of National Defence and the cabinet, as a matter of fact—what type of commitment could be undertaken, what facilities would be required and the number of troops likely to be in-

volved. I am sure the kind of offer about which the Secretary of State for External Affairs was talking could be met by the resources available to us.

TRANSPORT

NOTICE BY RAILWAYS OF INTENTION TO
ABANDON PASSENGER SERVICES

Mr. Jack Cullen (Sarnia): I have a question for the Minister of Transport. Would the minister use his considerable influence to request that Canadian National Railways extend the courtesy of informing a community well in advance of its intention to cancel passenger train service and not adopt a secretive policy as is being followed in cancelling the Toronto-Chicago service which is Sarnia's only international train service?

Mr. Speaker: It is obvious that the hon. member's question has been put in the form of a submission. He will have to assume that the representation has been noted.

Mr. Cullen: May I make a supplementary submission, Mr. Speaker?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: According to the rules, the hon. member is only entitled to a related submission.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Cullen: It is related, Mr. Speaker. Would the government give consideration to the passing of legislation requiring the CNR and the CPR to return property to the people of Canada each time they reduce a service?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ABANDONMENT OF RAILWAY PASSENGER
SERVICES—SUPPLYING OF EXPENSE
FIGURES

Mr. W. M. Howe (Wellington-Grey): Bearing in mind the very large number of applications made by the railway companies to abandon passenger services, would the minister consider introducing amending legislation which would oblige the railways to supply all the figures with regard to expenses in connection with these applications for withdrawal of service?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): This question has been raised on previous occasions and the objections are well known to the hon. member. Figures are pro-