

North Atlantic Treaty

workers and the technicians of this country to produce arms and military equipment during the last war, it is the duty of the members of this house to insist that we shall be producing the rifles, machine guns, artillery weapons and other things that we have made in the past and can make now as well as any other country in the world. This is so closely related to this whole problem that I hope that when we return for the next session there will be very positive evidence that the delay in facing this issue has changed to vigorous action, and that the tremendous productive skill and capacity of this country will be at work supplying our defence forces with the weapons and equipment they need.

I can only express the hope that the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) in closing this debate will go somewhat further than he did when a question was asked earlier today. He was asked what position Canada had taken in the vote on December 22 in Paris when Greece, by a very narrow margin, became a member of the United Nations security council. We were told that those meetings are secret, and for that reason Canada's vote should not be disclosed. The governments of the member nations of the United Nations know how Canada voted. The fact is that I believe most of the members of this house know how Canada voted. After all, these things are discussed and should be discussed. I believe the members of this house have a right to know officially, as most of them know privately, and I believe the people of Canada have the right to know how Canada voted on this particular occasion. After all, it has been the subject of discussion in the press.

I would refer to a Canadian Press dispatch of December 20 from Paris which had this to say:

Greece narrowly won a seat today as eastern Europe's representative, in record-breaking balloting for a place on the United Nations security council.

Strong United States backing of Greece over Byelorussia was reported to have finally won over Britain and France to help break the deadlock.

Besides the temporary British-American split on the touchy issue, the commonwealth was divided on the question, informed sources said. Although the balloting was secret, these sources said Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Pakistan backed Byelorussia.

I grant that the government is not bound by a statement in a Canadian Press dispatch to the effect that informed sources said that Canada voted for the election of Byelorussia. But let us face reality. This Canadian Press dispatch was published right across Canada, and I am sure most Canadians accept that statement as being accurate. If it is not accurate let the minister say so. If it is

accurate, then let him say so as well. The reasons for secrecy while the discussions and voting are taking place are obvious. There are difficulties enough in dealing with matters of this kind without the pressures which might perhaps be exerted if some of these discussions were not held in secret. I can see reasons for that secrecy up to the point when the vote is taken. But I believe that after the vote has been taken, a vote known to the government of every member of the United Nations, the members of this and other legislative bodies have the right to know how Canada did vote.

I have no hesitation in saying that I think it would be the strong opinion of the people of Canada that Canada should not have backed Byelorussia for election to the security council as against Greece, whom we now welcome as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Temporizing of that kind was the thing that brought on the last world war. Temporizing has not stopped any dictator or military aggressor in the past. In 1940 and 1941, as well as the years that followed, we all said with deep conviction that never again if it was within our power would we see the word "appeasement" written in letters of blood across the face of the world. I, for one, am unable to see what it could be but appeasement to support the election of Byelorussia, which for all practical purposes is an integral part of Russia itself, and at a time when Greece, the birthplace of democracy, was about to be welcomed as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I hope that in his reply, on this day when we welcome Greece into this fellowship, the minister will recognize that secrecy has no meaning now and that the members of this house are entitled to know where Canada stood, so they may express their opinion with knowledge as to what course they would hope Canada would follow in the future in regard to the inclusion of any countries which have demonstrated that they believe in aggression if they can get away with it.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I must inform the house that if the minister speaks now he will close the debate.

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): It remains for me to close this discussion, and I suppose in a sense to end this session. In doing so I should like in the first place, on behalf of the government, to echo, though in less eloquent terms than those which have been used by the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew), the feeling that we must all have when we contemplate the