

S.O. 21

CNR. I should also like to call upon him to investigate the way in which safety is often affected by these so-called rationalizations. In this case I am referring to something that Members are already aware of, and that is the Nakina run-through, which will mean less actual visible inspection of track and fewer people on the ground, so to speak. We will be more reliant than ever on computers for rail safety, and this is not a good thing.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

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DISARMAMENT

CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION TO NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Stanley Hudecki (Hamilton West): Madam Speaker, it is a concern to me that many Canadians are not aware of the various disarmament initiatives in which Canada participates.

The most notable arms control negotiations currently under way are, first, the Intermediate Nuclear Force talks which are being held between the United States and the Soviet Union in Geneva, and second, the Strategic Arms Reduction talks in which the United States and the Soviet Union are debating the reduction of intercontinental ballistic missiles. Canada, as a member of NATO and NORAD, through our discussions with the United States, has an important say in these arms control negotiations.

Canada is a full participant in the mutual and balanced force reduction negotiations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, which are looking at the number of troops and weapons that would be acceptable for each side in Europe.

In addition, Canada participates in the 35-nation conference on security and co-operation in Europe, which includes discussions on military matters such as confidence building measures between east and west European nations.

Canada also participates in the United Nations Disarmament Commission which meets year round in Geneva. Of special note for the current year is that Canada is chairman of the committee which is working toward a ban on all chemical and biological weapons.

In addition, Canada is one of the very few countries which has an official ambassador for disarmament.

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CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

CALL FOR EXAMINATION OF SENATE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Madam Speaker, for over a decade military observers have viewed with alarm the deterioration of the Canadian Armed Forces. Personnel has

been reduced from a 1960 level of 126,000 to a current level of 80,000. The reserves experienced an even greater reduction.

• (1110)

Much of the equipment used by the Canadian Armed Forces is now aged and obsolete, yet the officers and ranks struggle to meet our NATO and other commitments in defence of Canada and the free world. Promises of improvements and increased spending on national defence have not been kept. Now the Government must act.

The House of Commons has been silenced by the Government majority, but the report of the Senate subcommittee on National Defence has exposed the real facts on Maritime Command and defence policy to public view. We see a naval force crippled by inadequate equipment and stymied by lack of ministerial policy direction.

The subcommittee recommendations are detailed and thoughtful, and deserve careful examination by the Government. In broad terms, we must give force to the demand for a \$550 million annual increase in the expenditures to arrest the decline in status and readiness of our Maritime forces. Such an increase would generate job-creation activity in shipbuilding, and more important, would stall the decline in conventional arms and minimize the need to resort to nuclear weapons in our national defence.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, in a speech to the United Nations Association in Ottawa the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) stressed Canada's opposition to armed attacks on legitimate Governments in Central America but remained silent on U.S. financed and directed attacks on Nicaragua. The Canadian Government has not demanded evidence of the existence of arms shipments from Nicaragua to Honduras which the U.S. says justifies its support for counter revolutionary activities in Honduras and Nicaragua. The Canadian Government has not condemned the U.S. program of "destabilization" of Nicaragua, a program which has brought about the death of over 700 Nicaraguans in the last six months. The Canadian Government has not challenged the U.S. campaign of disinformation about conditions in Nicaragua, and in particular the American distortion of the situation of the Miskito Indians.

Instead of silently backing U.S. policy in Central America, Canada should be moving forward to help Nicaraguans build a democratic, pluralistic and prosperous society as they approach the fourth anniversary of their revolution this July 19.